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DARCY'S CHILD;

OR,

THE DUKE'S CHOICE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"*Sybil's Inheritance*," "*Evelyn's Plot*," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXII.

How well are they that die ere they be born,
And never see thy slights, which few men shun
Till unawares they helpless are undone.

Rosalind had lifted the white covering from the face of that still and senseless form with a trembling hand and a sickening sense of alarm which were certainly not entirely produced by the presence of death.

There was a vague terror in her heart that was attributable to a far different source than the instinctive shrinking from the presence of the grim tyrant—a terror that is almost unreasonable in its apprehensions where there is a strong, deep love in the soul.

Could it be Clinton St. Maur who lay there in that rigid insensibility to all around? or, rather, was it the frame from which the spirit had fled which was there in mockery of the living being it once represented? The very idea first paralyzed, then gave her a kind of desperate courage.

She lifted the shrouding-sheet with a pale face, in which determination and grief were contending for mastery.

But the countenance that met her view was not the young and handsome features of Clinton St. Maur. The deeply lined face and gray hair spoke of a very different age and temperament to the young and impetuous nobleman's.

It was the aged and hard-worked face of the physician, Doctor Moore. He who had tended others on sick-beds, relieved pain, and warded off the approach of death was now the victim of the sure and remorseless enemy of mankind.

Rosalind's tears sprang to her eyes, and fell on the cheeks of the corpse, as she gazed on the sad, still

RODALIND'S CHARGE.]

features of one who had stood her friend in an hour of great agony and dread.

Then she reverently replaced the sheet, and stole from the room, with the intention of ascertaining the truth as to this sudden and terrible fate. But, just as she was hesitating in the hall as to whether she should return to her room and ring a bell, she perceived a servant coming with the quiet, slow steps that seem instinctive in the house of death.

"How did this happen? What killed him?" Rosalind whispered.

"Please, miss, he—that is, my master—was crossing the moor to go and see Sir Henry, his horse seems to have stumbled over a big stone, and thrown him, or else he got a fit or something; and he was found quite dead, for the horse came home, which made us send out to look for him."

Poor Rosalind! Again an evil fate seemed to pursue her and all connected with her.

This was certainly a morbid fancy, since Sir Henry's accident was utterly unconnected with her; but still death and illness and a violent end seemed to surround her like an atmosphere. Surely she must have been born and cradled under a fiery planet, which brought such evil influences to all connected with her.

"And," pursued the servant, "it's a very queer thing that Mrs. Marston, the attendant of the sick lady, has gone out and not returned. It looks like a bewitchment, miss. We don't know what to do with my lady now that my master and her own maid are gone, so we just turned the key as she seemed to be asleep, and I suppose she has not woken up yet."

"May I go to her—I don't think she would mind me?" asked Rosalind. "I will take care of her till something can be arranged for her."

"Oh, yes, miss; I'm sure we shall be very glad, what we are about, any of us."

"Where is the key?" asked the girl, quickly.

"It's in the door, miss. We did not like to take it out, and of course she can't get at it, poor body."

Rosalind bent her head in assent, then went

softly up the stairs in the direction where she had been conducted on the previous day by the deceased physician, till she reached the secured door. Then she paused and listened.

There was a low, moaning sound, like almost to a child's wail, and she hastily turned the key and entered.

Lady Darcy was sitting on the side of the bed, half dressed, as if her power had failed her ere the toilet was complete. Her small feet, and her still white arms and shoulders were bare, while she crouched shivering down, wailing as she rocked herself to and fro with the piteous sound that Rosalind had heard.

"Can I help you to dress, dear Lady Darcy?" said the girl, approaching her. "You must be sadly cold, and without a fire too. I will order one."

The invalid sprang as it were into the speaker's arms, and nestled up to her bosom like a helpless infant.

"Oh, I am so glad you have come, Geraldine; but why do you call me Lady Darcy? Am I not your mother—your loving mother?"

"It is better that I should do so as the others do not know it," said Rosalind, honouring the delusion so far as truth would permit. "It might surprise them, you know."

"Ah, yes; you are right. It is better to keep it all a secret. I have so much to tell you and to arrange with you before any one comes. For I have thought it all over, and I have resolved to get away from every one, unless I can see that justice is done. It is like helping fraud and wrong, you know, to live with those who have done wrong and not tell it."

"Well, never mind just now. You must be dressed and have your breakfast, then we can talk about all this."

"Where is the doctor?" asked the lady, suddenly.

Rosalind hesitated what to reply. She could not tell a falsehood, even to that sick and weak-minded woman, yet the shock might be hurtful to such shaken nerves.

"He is in the house, but you will not see him today," she answered, at length.

"I know it. He is dead," said Lady Darcy, calmly. "Ah, I like you for telling the truth. I wanted to try you, because now I can trust you, as you will not tell me falsehoods like other people."

"Indeed, I will not. I had rather refuse to answer you at all," returned the girl, drawing the stockings over the cold, little feet and rubbing them with her own feverish hands.

"Then tell me—will you say whither Marston is gone?"

"That I cannot tell you. She will come back, I suppose," she replied.

"No, I don't believe it. She went away and took some things with her, that told me she never meant to come back. Will you take me, Geraldine? I must be with you, and I cannot stay here now the doctor is dead. They would come and take me, and I would die rather than go back."

"Who would come, and to what place won't you go back?" asked the girl, still proceeding with her gentle caress.

"He would, Sir Ralph I mean; and I cannot—I will not go! no, not if I die for it!" said the invalid, shuddering. "I say, listen—listen!" she went on, bending down to the girl's ear and whispering low.

She uttered but a few words, but they blanched the girl's cheeks, and made her start back and gaze in the speaker's face, as if questioning the possibility of their truth.

"No, no; it is impossible! You must have dreamt it. It is too dreadful!" she gasped.

"Geraldine, my child, it is true. Listen, if you and I go somewhere, then your father will have to make some reparation, because he will want to find you again. He cannot do without his heiress for all this wealth that he has obtained so badly, and if I were dead or left this place by myself he would perhaps marry Lady Beatrice, and that would be another sin, you see, while I was alive."

Rosalind sat in thoughtful contemplation.

She recalled the ominous words of the singular domestic, the promise that she had well nigh extorted by force that she would tend the unhappy Lady Darcy and protect her in the time of need. The very delusion under which the invalid laboured seemed to be an additional claim on her, while it also made the task more easy.

Poor girl! She had never known a mother's love, she had never even heard her name mentioned. It was an unconsciously sweet fancy that assigned to her the duties of a child, when the sole remaining parent was removed from her either by death or hopeless concealment.

"What could I do? How dare I to countenance such a flight, and from your husband, dear lady?" she said, hesitatingly.

"But you must—you must! Listen," she repeated. "If you would save more guilt, more misery than you can calculate, you will shelter me for the present. He will kill me—I know it—or put me in some dreadful misery. When he placed me here he thought I should die from grief, because I should be so lonely and desolate. I cannot tell why, but some good angel seemed to whisper to me that I ought to live, and that it would be for a blessing and atonement if I did. So I have tried so hard, so very hard not to die, and Heaven has sent you to me, I can see, to reward me, and that I might go away with you."

A strange solemnity and strength were in her tone and manner, all unlike the wandering delusions that had hitherto seemed to speak the weakness and the disease that were at work within her.

Rosalind felt almost as if there was a special direction in the remarkable events that had combined to make the course thus advised even possible to be pursued.

"Had we not better wait?" she said, gently. "I will certainly not leave you—no, not for a moment—till you are under some one's care and protection who can make you safe and happy."

"Of course you will not, but I tell you we must go—go!" said Lady Darcy, determinately. "If you do not take me, I shall die. I have sworn never to return to my husband, nor to Darcy Manor till all is stoned for and made clear. Girl, when you go to your husband, be sure—very sure that he does not aim to gain you. Sir Ralph said such soft things, and seemed to love me because I was foolish enough to believe him; then, directly I was married, and he had all my money, he seemed to hate and despise me. But I can see it all now—all. He loves Lady Beatrice, and he wants to kill me and to get you married, then he will marry her."

Rosalind shivered at the dark picture of crime thus drawn, which appeared but too real in its graphic painting, and too well accorded with the hints of the absent Marston.

"But," she remonstrated, "I am poor. I have no money, and you have been brought up in luxury. What can I do to maintain you, Lady Darcy?"

"Oh, I have a little, very little; but still it will do.

Listen. I have been preparing for a long, long time for something like this, and see what I have here."

She took a pair of scissors from a basket that Marston had probably left by accident on a table, and cut a piece of linen from the cover of her bodice and drew from the safe receptacle a little packet, which contained two ten-pound notes.

"There," she said, with the half-cunning glance of a weak and wandering mind, "that will keep us for a long time; then I can tell you what you can do. You must sing—I heard you sing once—and it would bring you money—plenty of money, I am sure."

Rosalind did not reply for a moment. The idea was new, but still it rather commanded itself to her mind on consideration. She could not ignore the extreme and genuine sensation which her singing had excited at the Embassy ball. The Prince of Monaco was one of the keenest musical critics in Europe, and he had pronounced her voice and execution unrivaled for an amateur. Even Clinton St. Maur had been unwillingly forced to admire, ay, in the midst of his haughty and unmerited scorn.

If she could but commence such a career she felt she should succeed. But how to find any introduction? and, still more, how could she face the publicity, the sights, and the still more insulting homage she might receive?

"Father," she mentally ejaculated, "father, shall I be worthy of all your self-denial and training, of all the attainments you have done so much to obtain for me? Will it not be rather a holy ease of it to save this poor victim, and, if her words are true, to save an assessment for the evil dead that have been done against her and others?"

For Rosalind Tyrell to believe that the most repugnant course was her duty was enough to enable her to face every pain or labour in its performance. In any case she could always restore the injured Viols to her husband should after events lead her to believe that it would be expedient for the patient's peace and safety to place her again in Sir Ralph's power.

It was a strange and rapid flow of varied ideas which rushed through the girl's mind, yet so brief was the pause ere she answered the eager invalid that even the anxious and pleading questioner scarcely had time to grow impatient for the reply.

"Lady Darcy," she said, slowly, "if I did not once comply with your will it was not from fear for myself. But it is so terrible a thing to part wife from husband's care that I dare not lightly undertake such a responsibility. Tell me once more—are you sure—quite sure—of the justice of your suspicion? and will you promise me to return to your home when you've accomplished your purpose?"

"I will! I will!" she answered, eagerly. Then, in a subdued tone, she continued, "Yes; I may safely promise that. I shall go home—the only peaceful home I can ever know—and be at rest."

If Rosalind had doubted before, the pathos of those last words would have decided her resolve. It was impossible to refuse that fragile, dying creature the sole consolation of her last days on earth.

She bent down and kissed her with a child-like tenderness.

"I will do as you desire," she said, softly. "Yes, till you are in happiness—till you yourself desire it—I will never leave you more."

"That is right—that is well!" exclaimed the invalid, eagerly. "It is a child's duty, you know—and you are my own darling—my only child, Geraldine. Ah, you are so beautiful and good!—I never knew how much so till now! You are fit indeed to be the heiress of Darcy!"

"There now! You must do all I say," returned Rosalind. "Lie down after you have breakfast, and I will think over what can be done and arrange our plans. Rely on me. I have promised, and will keep my word."

"Yes, yes; there is no fear. And I will be good—oh, so good!" was the child-like reply.

And the gentle sufferer resigned herself to the young girl's care, like a submissive and unreasoning dependent on her will.

Poor Rosalind! It was a bewildering responsibility thus cast upon her, but she served herself for the task with a brave and self-deny ing resolve.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

The joy most like divine
Of all I ever dreamt or knew,
To see thee, hear thee, call thee mine;

Oh, misery! must I lose that too?

It was the eve of Clinton St. Maur's wedding, and he was pacing the comparative solitudes of the Bois de Boulogne in a mood all unlike that of a happy and expectant bridegroom.

How he hated himself for his weakness. He fought like a desperate man against the rebellious passion that was every hour gaining upon him, as if in perverse contrariety to the new bonds he was about to take upon himself.

Each moment that he had passed near his betrothed bride since his arrival in Paris had but served to chill his sudden passion for the child-like Geraldine and reanimate, with painful force, the image of Rosalind Tyrell. He told himself that he hated the huntsman's daughter—he recalled every action, every thought, that told powerfully against her.

Still the ungovernable heart beat for this faulty but fascinating girl, and still the force and talent of her character asserted itself when compared with the colourless though innocent and loving heiress of Darcy.

"I am a weak, criminal idiot!" he exclaimed, at length, stamping on the ground on a sudden turn in his promenade. "Just because this girl is a daring, unscrupulous adventuress I am helpless victim in her hands—while a pure, sweet, lovely, high-born girl is actually hanging on my every look and word for happiness. One must indeed be distraught to prefer a raven to a dove—to sacrifice Geraldine Darcy for Rosalind Tyrell!"

"Who is it that speaks of Rosalind Tyrell?" said a strange, hollow voice near him, and, turning sharply round, he perceived a haggard, travel-worn figure standing near him, in whom he for some moments could not recognize the unhappy accused murderer of Walter Tyrell—the barely acquitted Eustace Downes.

"I might rather ask who are you, my good fellow?" said the duke, compassionately, for a harder heart than his must have been touched at the unmistakable marks of agony and hardships in the young man's face. "But I think I cannot be wrong in supposing you are the former domestic of Lord Mont-Aspen?"

"I don't care to deny it. I am quite past hopes or fears, except for her," replied Eustace, with the bold composure of despair. "Not I did not do it—no, I am innocent of the murder as before, and I am wandering like a troubled spirit till I can prove it, then lie down at her feet again."

"Then you still love her, you still cherish her memory?" said the duke, strongly interested in his humble and unconscious rival. "Yet she seemed unworthy of your devotion to whom you after she had given you such encouragement."

"She!" exclaimed the young man, indignantly, "she unworthy of me! You might as well say that an angel in eminence of the morning stars is unworthy of me!" You might as well say that the noblest creature that ever treaded the earth!"

"But did she not give you up afterwards? Had she meetings with you, and even rebelled against her master's will by encouraging you against his knowledge and permission?"

"It is false!" cried Eustace, vehemently. "Rosalind Tyrell was so far above me that it was simple madness in me to think of her. Only her patient goodness could have tolerated my presumption without killing me with scorn. I can see it all now that my brain is cleared from the fog of passion. Yet it burns—it burns sadly!" he went on, with plaintive wailing, pressing his hand to his hot brow.

"Then did she not come to meet you on that day when the shooting party were in the wood?" resumed the duke, sharply.

"Meet me! Rosalind Tyrell meet me! Man, whoever you are, you must be mad or dreaming!" exclaimed Eustace, fiercely. "The Earl's daughter could not have been more proud or more reserved than she was. Had she loved me, which she never did, she would never have stooped either to deception or to any clandestine meeting."

The duke was silenced.

This humble, accused lover of Rosalind fairly shamed him by his generous defence of one who had, however innocently, been the very ruin and destruction of his life.

"My poor fellow, come with me," he said, after a painful pause. "Let me give you some refreshment and repose; you look sadly in need of both."

"No, I must not rest till my work is done," replied the wanderer, meekly. "I must find her, and him, before I can take rest. Then I can be free to lie down in the grave."

It was the same cry which Lady Darcy had uttered—the same resolve.

Strange how a mutual feeling brings the most opposite in rank and sex and age to each other.

"A fellow feeling makes no wondrous like" is a true and touching proof of the common nature which binds all mankind in one great sympathy.

"Are you going to her then?" asked the duke.

"If I knew where she was! I have traced her to the coast, and thence to Brussels, but they said they knew nothing about her there, and that Sir Henry Greville was too ill for the likes of me to be admitted to see him or his lady."

"He is living then?" said the duke, quickly.

"Yes, I suppose so. I only cared about her. Then I heard something that made me want to come here, though I find it was all moonshine," he answered impatiently.

"Well, I believe I can help you so far," returned the duke, after a brief struggle with himself. "I will give you what I believe to be her address, if you like to come back with me to my hotel. But to-morrow I am going to be married to Miss Darcy, so I can do no more than furnish you with some money to help you in your search."

"To Miss Darcy! Then I was wrong. You did not love her?" cried the young man, gazing in wonder at the duke's face, which crimsoned deeply, much to Clinton's mortification.

"I cannot pretend to account for your fancies, young man. I presume my marriage is a sufficient answer," he said, coldly. "Now will you return with me?"

"Cannot you give it me here? I don't want to owe anything to one who has belied her; and is blind to her rare gifts and her precious love," said Eustace, contemptuously. "But where is she—where is she?"

The duke felt a sharp pang as of a stab through his very heart at the words.

"Rosalind's love! Was it possible that it had been him, and that he had misjudged and cast from him the only woman who had ever really touched his heart? But then the other crowd of suspicious circumstances came on his mind, and he despised his own folly at ever for an instant giving weight to the words of a half-crazed lover.

"I will do as you wish," he said, coldly, taking from his pocket the small tablets that he usually carried, and writing a few words on one of them; he placed it in the young man's hand, together with a cash-note of some value.

Then, turning on his heel, he disappeared among the trees ere Eustace had time to follow or to restore to him the hated gift.

The duke walked hastily to his hotel, and rang with unusual violence for his valet to complete his toilet for dinner at Sir Ralph's.

All the usual forms and etiquettes of such occasions were now to be laid aside, and Clinton had promised to spend the evening with the family of his fiancee to complete the final arrangements for the morrow.

"My innocent Geraldine. She must not suffer for the faults and folly of these less guileless than herself," he murmured as he entered Sir Ralph's hotel, and soon came into the presence of his betrothed.

"Papa and Lady Beatrice are together," she said as the duke sat down beside her. "I fancy something is the matter, Clinton. But they never tell me anything, and that only makes me more frightened. You will not act so, will you, dear Clinton, will you?"

"No, no. Trust me for that, my darling," he replied, though a guilty consciousness that there was at least one secret kept inviolate from hot toto perhaps some of the ring of truth from his tones. And he gladly turned the conversation to other subjects.

Geraldine was right.

At the moment when she was thus innocently appealing to her lover Lady Beatrice Thornhill was listening to the guilty confidences of the man she had loved with an intense though less pure affection than that entertained by the young daughter of Sir Ralph.

"Are you certain? Can you rely on it?" she said as Sir Ralph concluded.

"Certainly. I have it from Sanders himself, and I believe he would not dare to deceive me, when I could so easily test him," was the reply.

"Yet it seems so in possible, Marston to disappear, and Lady Darcy to take courage to leave the house alone, I can hardly credit it of her, so weak and nerveless as she is."

Beatrice, she is mad, that is the truth; and, of course, by this time she is dead. As well send out a tame bird among a woodful of hawks as Viola into the world alone and destitute."

"What do you mean to do next?" she asked, sharply.

"Get this wedding over, then ascertain whether this is true, and, then, what would be your next move, Beatrice?" he asked, meaningly. "Do you know?" he added, "that you are remarkably well preserved still—very handsome? I must confess, in spite of your forty years—"

"Ralph, I am but eight-and-thirty in years, and not more than eighteen in heart," answered Lady Beatrice, with a kind of tearful glitter in her eyes. "Never even in my earliest years, never, when I first knew and loved you, did I feel a deeper or more devoted affection for you than I do now. Ralph, surely it is about to be rewarded. There are years of happiness before us yet."

He gave a gloomy smile.

"Well, yes, I suppose so—that is, if I can manage to screw up my courage for a second trial, Beatrice, and forget the past," he said, sullenly.

"Ralph, I once told you I would carry you through all—sacrifice my very life to support you, and raise you to the summit of your hopes," said the lady, in a low, deep tone. "I say so still. In life and death, in

crime or innocence, disgrace or honour, I will never fail you. Viola St. Clair never was capable of that, never knew what such love meant. She had but wealth to give you. I have what wealth will not purchase or menials supply—a strong woman's help and support."

"Well, well, I believe you, and I will keep my word, Beatrice. We will have a second wedding before long, and with more pomp and prestige than this one that is to come off to-morrow; and, mark ye, if we should have an heir some day, why then the noblest wife in Christendom shall not have a more splendid reward."

"And if not, Ralph—if not," said Beatrice, sadly, "you will get weary of me, as you have of Viola St. Clair? I should scarcely be so easily disposed of remember, as she is."

A dark frown came scowling on the baronet's brow for a moment, then it disappeared in a forced smile.

"Come, come, Beatrice, no more of this childish folly. Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof, and I much mistake if you do not prove equal to the occasion. A bright future may yet be before us, after all these years of waiting and endurance. But there is the dinner-bell. Mind, not one word to St. Maur or Geraldine of what I have heard."

Lady Beatrice gave one glance at her still-handsome and most perfectly stirred figure as she passed the mirror, leaning on Sir Ralph's offered arm. Already she felt like the proud and honoured wife of the only man she had ever loved.

Guilty as she was, an element of true and intense passion mingled with the baser part of her nature in a measure redeemed it from the unalloyed and selfish criminality that pervaded Ralph Darcy's every action and thought.

It was a strange evening that last night before the day that was to conclude for ever the single life of those two young creatures.

A forced gaiety, covering an anxious and troubled spirit, marked the manner of each, save indeed of the innocent bride elect.

To her there was a delicious and entrancing happiness in the consciousness that she was about to be for life secure in the care of one so good and noble as Clinton St. Maur.

She asked nothing, wished for nothing, save to know that she was to be his, never dreaming in her sweet innocence that there could be danger or sadness near him.

And when he parted with her, his presumed choice on that night, and pressed a light kiss on her brow, she smiled like a confiding child as she returned his farewell for, as he fondly trusted, the last time.

It was a natural trust; but what mortal can foresee, even for a few brief hours, the vicissitudes and incidents of this transitory and changing life?

CHAPTER XXIV.

'Tis the midnight hour—the tempestuous sea,
Calm as the cloudless heaven, the haven discloses,
While many a sparkling star in quiet glee
Far down within the watery sky reposes.

On that same evening, when Clinton St. Maur bade farewell to his young betrothed, Rosalind Tyrell was sitting in the chamber of Lady Darcy, busily engaged in calming the invalid's shattered nerves, and preparing her for the trial that lay before her.

"Are you quite sure?" she said, gently, as she administered some wine and restoratives to the fragile patient, "that what is necessary for you will not be too much for your strength? I know very little of Brussels, remember, and I think that unless I can get at once to Paris I should have very little chance of obtaining any employment in the way you suggested. Are you able to encounter so long a journey?"

"Yes, yes. I am strong enough for anything," said the lady, impatiently. "But listen. I must tell you all my secrets, and you must swear to me to carry out all my plans, should I be taken away too soon for their completion. See—here are, sewn up in my dress—these papers. I had better give them to you, for you have more strength than I have. And listen. I know that you will keep your promise not to look at them till I give you leave, or till I am dead."

"I do—I do promise, dear Lady Darcy," said the girl, hurriedly. "They will be as sacred with me as with yourself, only I entreat you to be quick, for time is precious."

Lady Darcy, with trembling fingers, tore open the folds of her inner bodice, and took from it a packet of papers, which she entrusted to Rosalind's care.

Then she paused for a brief minute, and drew from another place of concealment an envelope containing some stouter enclosures, which she opened and contemplated carefully for a few moments.

"Look here," she said. "Here are some remnants from the terrible fire at the Grange which Marston found in the library, where Sir Robert was smothered by the smoke. I have often thought there

was a likeness to my own darling in one of these. See—"

Rosalind took the offered enclosure, which consisted of two cards.

One was a child of some two years old, lying on a turf, playing with a large and hideous-looking baboon.

The little girl was one of the loveliest little creatures ever perpetuated by art, with features, even at that early age, that had intellect and sweetness stamped on them; and eyes of almost unnatural size and thought.

The monster, for such he really seemed to the eyes of the wondering Rosalind, seemed to watch over the child with protecting fondness that could scarcely have been credited in so frightful a creature.

He was receiving some child toy from her hands, and sporting with it to amuse his little mistress, who had evidently no fear of her ungainly companion.

"How strange that such a creature should be allowed to play with such a little child," she said as she laid the card down and took up the other which Lady Darcy held out.

"Oh, it was a fancy of the little Amine's," said the invalid. "Marston has often told me of it. The baboon had been brought to the house by a relative of Lady Darcy's—I mean Sir Robert's wife—and he took a most strange affection for the infant, who grew up like a playfellow for him. And when the fire took place Marston says she saw the creature leaping up to the room where Amine slept, as if he knew there was danger; but she could not tell whether he gave up the search, or whether he was burned with the poor little girl. But tell me, is not the child like what you might have been?" she asked, sharply.

"Like me?" repeated Rosalind, in surprise.

"Yes, yes. You never seem to remember that you are Amine's cousin and my own sweet daughter," returned Lady Darcy, half angrily. "I am afraid you do not love me like a mother, Geraldine."

"Yes, yes, indeed, indeed I do," returned the girl, soothingly.

But still her eyes were fixed on the other card which she held in her hand, and it seemed to bring back before her a long-unseen yet well-remembered and familiar face.

It was a man of noble but wasted features, eyes that expressed the deepest and most intense passion, and a mouth of stern and compressed determination, but with a sweetness in its smile that was the more touching in its rarity.

"Who is that?" she asked, suddenly.

"It is Amine's father, Sir Robert Darcy, your uncle, Geraldine. Don't you see it is something like your father?"

Yes, it was something like Marcus Darcy, and, therefore, like Walter Tyrell; and Rosalind, with a confused and romantic suspicion, for which she chid herself the next moment, compared in her own mind the singular and bewildering resemblance between the pictures she had before seen and Sir Robert and the humble huntsman to whom she owed her own being.

"I do not deny the resemblance, dear Lady Darcy," she said, gently. "Now let us go on with our business. Am I to take these photographs also?"

"Yes, yes, all. You have promised not to leave me, so it will be quite safe for you to have them," returned the invalid. "Now, what are we to do next?"

"First, I have to pack up as many of your clothes and jewels as I can carry," said the girl. "Then you must trust to me, as we go out in the dark of the night, and neither cry out nor speak till we reach the carriage, which will be waiting for us not very far from here."

"How did you get it?" asked the invalid, sharply. "Surely you did not tell any of the servants here? They would betray me to Sir Ralph."

"No, I have had a promise from some unknown friend that it should be there," returned Rosalind. "Only, if you are afraid, and do not trust to me entirely, I must give all up, and leave you to the mercy of your proper protectors."

"No, no, anything but that—anything but that!" said the poor invalid, clinging helplessly to the girl. "Only be patient with me, that is all."

"I will; only this is our last chance, for to-morrow Doctor Moore is to be buried, then there will be strangers in the house and different arrangements made. But as it is every one is too much occupied and frightened to take much notice of us."

Lady Darcy assented, and permitted Rosalind to finish her toilet and wrap her up in a large white cloak trimmed with ermine, that was at once the largest and warmest mantle she possessed, then put over her still-abundant tresses a bonnet and a thick white veil, which nearly reached to her knees.

"Ah," she said, when all was finished. Rosalind, after rapidly placing the most portable valuables in a small valise, had attire herself in a black hood and mantle, which she had chosen from

among the wardrobe belonging to the absent Geraldine.

"This is a strange contrast, is it not? You ought to be a bride you know, and I ready for the grave; but, yes, yes, it is all right, I see now what you meant. I am the bride of death, and you are going to wear mourning for me. But not long—not for long, my darling. I shall be happy then, you know, when all is over, and it ought rather to be that you should rejoice instead of grieve when the troubles of this weary life are spent."

She was irresistibly touching in her gentle plaints that mock sufferer, and Rosalind felt at the moment that she could endure any amount of hardship and blame also in delivering one so injured and so helpless from the fate she dreaded. It was a thrilling time of expectation till the household prepared to retire to rest.

The subdued movements that belong to the house of death almost baffled her quick senses in determining what was the safest hour to venture forth on her daring errand.

But at length all seemed still, every sound was hushed, and no lights could be discerned from either windows or doors in the large mansion.

Rosalind stepped forth from the chamber, went along the corridor, and listened at the top of the stairs.

No sound save the ticking of the massive hall clock met her ears, all else was still as the grave. She hastened back to the room, and, placing her finger on her lips, took Lady Darcy's hand, and half forcibly drew her from the room, and closed the door softly behind her. They stepped cautiously on.

The trembling invalid leant with ominous weight on her young companion's arm as they slowly descended the stairs, till they passed the room where the corpse lay, and Rosalind paused for a brief moment, as if in reverence for the holy presence of death. The next instant she started in terror, and shaded the lamp she carried behind her back, so as to cast a subdued light on her own and Lady Darcy's figure. The door of the library opened, and a figure issued forth and stood for a moment as if thunder-stricken, as it saw the shadowy forms, which borrowed, as it were, a supernatural radiance from the light behind them.

Rosalind pressed her companion's hand convulsively, in warning for silence, and, happily, terror sealed rather than opened Lady Darcy's pale lips, till, after a brief examination that seemed yet an hour's delay to poor Rosalind's anxious nerves—the watcher—whichever it might be—gave a faint cry of alarm, and, retreating again within the chamber of death, turned the key in the lock to secure itself from intrusion.

Rosalind passed her hand over her eyes to clear the mist that gathered over them—the half-formed fancies that the imperfect glimpse she obtained of the figure had conjured up.

That it was no time for pausing to consider whether her recognition of that lone watcher could have been correct—no time to decide on the danger or the safety which such a rencontre might bring to her and hers.

Her duty was too urgent for such deliberation, and, passing her arm round the fragile creature whose strength was failing even on that first trial, she half supported, half carried her across the hall, and passed along a narrow passage which she knew led to a side door. She felt a sudden rush of air that well-nigh extinguished the lamp she carried, and with a mingled fear and thankfulness she perceived that the portal was already open. It was dark—very dark—as she stepped out into the midnight gloom.

The wind whistled through the trees, the owls were screaming as they sat on the stunted boughs, and a distant howling of a dog added to the dismal terror of the lonely scene through which the helpless women were to take their trembling way.

(To be continued.)

THE NEW ACT ON PETROLEUM.—One of the last Acts of the late Session was passed for the safe keeping of petroleum and other substances of a like nature. This statute, which repeals two Acts and part of another, is to continue in force till the 1st of October, 1872. In a schedule annexed directions are given for testing petroleum to ascertain the temperature at which it gives off inflammable vapour. By the Act harbour authorities are to frame and submit to the Board of Trade for confirmation bye-laws as to ships carrying petroleum, which are to be published; and where any ship or cargo is moored, landed, or otherwise dealt with, the owner and master, or the owner of the cargo, is to be liable to a penalty of 50*s.* for each day during which the contravention of the bye-laws is continued. The owner or master of a vessel carrying petroleum is to give notice to the harbour authority on entering the place. Labels are to be placed on all vessels containing petroleum. Regulations are to be made

as to the storage of petroleum, and, if otherwise deposited, to be forfeited and penalties to be enforced. Licences may be granted for the keeping of petroleum, with an appeal to the Secretary of State. Any officer authorized by a local authority may test petroleum in the manner prescribed, with penalties for obstructing the officer or refusing the liberty of testing. Power is given to search for petroleum, and to seize the same if not properly kept. The Act may be applied to other substances, and summary proceedings are to be taken to enforce the provisions for the public safety.

SCIENCE.

THE MAGIC LANTERN AND DISEASES OF THE SKIN.—The magic lantern has been successfully applied in London to the study of diseases of the skin, by Dr. Balmanno Squire. A transparent photograph of the patient is taken, then placed in a magic lantern; a strong hydro-oxygen light casts the figure enlarged on a white sheet, and in this way the smallest details are brought out with astonishing minuteness.

THE TOTAL ECLIPSE OF THE SUN.—The total eclipse of the sun, on December 12th, will be visible from Hindooostan, the Indian Ocean, Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific Ocean. Arrangements are being made for securing careful observations of all the phenomena attending the eclipse; the astronomer-royal is arranging instruments for use in India; the president of the Royal Society is sending instruments of the newest and most approved kind to Australia; the Royal Society of New South Wales sends an expedition to Cape Sidmouth; and Ceylon is to be taken possession of by a staff of astronomical observers from England.

DRILLING.—A very remarkable mechanical discovery has been made by a Mr. Tilghman, of Philadelphia. He has discovered that a strong jet of air, steam, or water, mixed with some such material as sand, can drill a hole in or eat away the face of any substance, no matter how hard, in an amazingly short space of time. With sand and a steam jet of 300 lbs. pressure to the square inch, he made a hole in a block of corundum—a material as hard as diamond—an inch and a half deep in less than twenty-five minutes. In like manner, by covering glass with perforated paper, on some semi-elastic substance, he has been able to work out the most beautiful and intricate patterns, sand and compressed air being employed. In short, the uses of this new discovery seem to be almost unlimited, and it will certainly create a revolution in the mechanical world.

TINTING THE ELECTRIC SPARK.—M. E. Bequerel has shown that the electric spark may be diversely and beautifully coloured by being made to pass through saline solutions. If an electrical spark from an inductive apparatus be made to pass into the extremity of a platinum wire suspended over the surface of the solution of a salt, this spark will receive special coloration according to the chemical composition of the solution traversed. The saline solutions are best concentrated, and the platinum wire positive. The experiment is readily performed in a glass tube. Salts of strontium will colour the spark red; chloride of sodium, yellow; chloride of copper, blueish green, &c. The light from these sparks, analysed by the spectroscope, furnishes a method for the determination of the nature of the salts contained in the solution.

ROCK BORING.—The invention of Mr. F. Ville, Autun, France, consists, first, of a standard, formed either of a metal tube of any suitable section (which is the kind preferred), or of bars fastened together, or of a solid piece with a longitudinal groove in the same, or of a wheel trolley, carriage, or frame. This standard carries at one extremity thereof an oscillating claw working on an axis, by which it is connected with the standard, and at the other extremity thereof is a screw, the nut of which is fixed on the said standard, and this screw is provided at its lower end with a guide washer, which fits inside the tube and steadies the screws. The screw last described is terminated by a head having holes or faces to enable it to be easily turned in the nut, and is surmounted by a steel or iron point, which penetrates the surface it is in contact with; or for the said steel or iron point the inventor substitutes in some cases a revolving claw in connection with the screw, and permitting the same to turn or else a claw forming a part of the head of the screw, the nut in the latter case turning in the standard.

SINGULAR LAUNCH.—Nearly twenty years ago the keel of a small vessel was laid near the Bute Dock Foundry, Cardiff. Industriously the solitary builder worked upon the vessel, early and late, during his spare hours. Piece by piece the framework was erected. Plank by plank the sides were built up; but before they were finished the decomposing influences of rain and atmosphere took effect, re-

pairs had to be attended to, and year after year the finishing strokes always remained to be done, so that the vessel was never, until within the last few days, in a completed state. Additional help has lately been obtained, or probably there would still be a doubt as to the native element of the craft. During the progress of the building various names have been given to the vessel, various the mottoes inscribed upon her, but the name by which she is generally known is "Noah's Ark." To some extent the name may be appropriate, but there are some essential differences between the original and the caricature, which it is unnecessary to note. A few days ago she was safely launched, and there she floats, in the West Bute Dock, a memorial of patient diligence. It will be pity if she be not soon sent to sea, to bring the owner a good return for all that she has cost him. The launch occupied several days, and as she was taken across two sets of rails and through a timber-yard it will be seen that some unusual difficulties have been encountered and successfully overcome.

TORPEDO EXPERIMENTS.—Some interesting experiments with marine torpedoes are at present being carried on in the Medway by the Royal Engineers. A wooden hut has been erected on the river bank, and inside the hut is placed an instrument which in appearance somewhat resembles an ordinary cottage piano-forte. The keys are all numbered, and each key when touched communicates by electric agency through connecting wires with one of a string of torpedoes anchored across the river. There is no risk of injury to ships at present passing up and down stream, for the torpedoes are not charged with gunpowder; and, indeed, if they were, the mere circumstance of a ship striking one would not of itself cause it to explode. When a ship runs against either of the torpedoes it simply causes the movement of a lever, which by its action conveys to the operator on shore the number of the particular torpedo which is under the ship's bottom. The operator then, supposing the torpedo to be charged, may if he chooses touch the corresponding key on the instrument before him, and thereby cause the torpedo to explode and destroy the vessel which is passing over it. A distinction can consequently at all times be made between friendly ships and those of the enemy, providing they can be seen from the shore. The object of the present experiments is chiefly to test the general working of the apparatus, and with this view a second hut is being erected, in which a duplicate instrument is to be placed, so that their accuracy may be effectually checked by comparison.

DISCOVERY OF LEAD ORE.—A discovery has been made of the existence of a large bed of lead ore on the west coast of Jersey close by the sea. Experiments that have been made show the ore to contain a large percentage of lead.

HOLBEIN'S PAINTINGS.—A journal of Zurich states that Professor Vogelli has discovered in the library of that town a decoration for a ceiling, painted by Holbein, which was supposed to have been lost. This work will be sent to the exhibition of paintings by that master now open at Munich.

A FOOD AND DRINK INSPECTOR.—At the Liverpool Town Council a resolution was recently adopted, instructing the health committee to report upon the advisability of appointing a borough analyst, and upon the necessity of adopting active measures for the detection of adulteration in the articles of food and drink, under the powers vested in corporate bodies by the statute 22nd and 24th Vic. In the course of the discussion Dublin was referred to as an example of the satisfactory working of the system, while the necessity of its adoption in Liverpool was strongly enforced, particularly in reference to drink, to the inferior quality of which, as regards beer, an eminent authority attributed much of the drunkenness of the town.

THE CASTLE OF THE QUEENS.—The picturesque Castle of Stolzenfels, well known to the tourists on the Rhine, seldom tenanted, is now occupied by twin sisters, both queens. Stolzenfels was purchased as a ruin by the town of Coblenz, and presented to the late King Frederick William IV. when Crown Prince, by whom it was restored at a great expense. It was bequeathed by the king to his widow, the Queen Dowager of Prussia, who is now occupying this charming retreat, while her twin sister, the Queen of Saxony, and the king are on a visit to her. The late king entertained Queen Victoria very sumptuously here in 1845. It is probably little known that a personage still survives in the Prussian Royal Family who connects the present with an interesting past epoch. The step-mother of the Emperor of Germany lives. Fourteen years after the death of his ill-fated queen, the beautiful Louise, King Frederick William III. contracted a morganatic marriage with a daughter of Count Von Harrack, and created her Princess von Liegnitz and Countess of Hohenzollern. This lady is now in her seventy-first year.



[LUKE'S WARNING.]

LUKE'S PROBATION.

CHAPTER IV.

There is a reaper whose name is Death,
And with his sickle keen
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath
And the flowers that grow between.

Longfellow.

Who can describe the weariness of a woman's soul for whom there is no hope this side of the grave—whose continual goad is work, work, from year's end to year's end, and no expectation of earthly reward, happy if sufficient is vouchsafed for food and shelter? Had it not been for Alice's pure mind and strong religious faith, she would have sunk under her burdens long ago.

As it was she held on in her quiet way in patience and humility, and, if not happy, yet bore about her a holy serenity that at times made her appear like a being of another world.

After the first shock of her parting with Luke was over Alice had gone back to the old factory to work, and the children under her watchful care, from being puny little creatures, had grown when nine months old to be large, healthy babes.

"Why," the collier's wife would often say, "they are almost as large as my boy, who is now twenty months old; but he has always been very delicate like."

Alice had not a robust constitution, and, living as she did in the continual dread of hearing her sister's name mentioned, and fearful of becoming unable to perform the task she had imposed on herself, her health gradually gave way, and she became the shadow of her former self.

While time was passing away in this indifferent manner a terrible calamity was hanging over the people of Oldham. Like most calamities it fell with a sharp, heavy stroke on the poor and unprepared—though people in a mining district live in the continual dread of such a tragedy. The colliers had demurred at entering the pit several days before the accident, but a few more foolhardy than the others had ventured down, and the rest followed in their wake.

Out of one hundred and fifty men only two, scarred and battered by former explosions, were wise enough to remain on upper earth.

It was a clear, beautiful day in June, with a breath of flowers in the air, and a soft murmur of winds even in the rough mining district, when towards the end of the day—even as the bell was about to be tolled for the cessation of labour—there was a low rumbling under the earth like distant thunder—a wild

explosion; then there burst forth from the horrid chasm a cloud of coal-dust, stones, and fire.

Oh! the agony and the wild cries of hopeless despair that rang out on the hot and lurid air that night—mothers moaning for their children, wives their husbands, children their fathers, sisters their brothers, and not one glint of hope for their poor, stricken hearts.

No one knew exactly how the accident had happened, although the mine was old and had been considered dangerous for some time; but it was supposed that some unfortunate man, half blinded by the coal dust, had taken off his screen to work with the uncovered candle. The rash and wicked act was always punished by discharge when known, but there was not a collier gazing at the ruin but knew it was done every day.

"Ned Aspell was the most careless lad of them all there," spoke a man. "It mowght be him as did it."

"Thee'd better shoot oop, lad," replied one of the scared old men. "I could blab sum'at o' thee if I wanted to. It's a poor, mean sneak that'll try to throw the blame on the dead."

"What will become of me!" cried a woman. "It was only to-day my Jimmy went to work in the mine for the first time."

"Not curly-headed little Jimmy?" cried several voices at once.

"Ay, curly-headed Jimmy," replied the woman, with that stony despair more fearful than the wildest paroxysms of tears.

"Your loss is not as bad as mine," broke in another. "John and me have not been married ten months."

What is seven miles for the news of such a calamity to travel? Alice had barely sat down to her evening meal when a boy came running into the cottage, exclaiming:

"Oh, Mrs. Aspell! the Moseley mine has exploded, and it's all afire!"

Alice ran out of her room, and found the poor woman fallen on her knees, with both hands pressed to her eyes, as though she would shut out the very light of day.

With the instinct of true sympathy she knelt down beside the shaking woman, and endeavoured to raise her to a seat.

"Let me be, lass!" she cried: "let me die. I don't want to live. Oh, my poor Ned! My poor burnt Ned!"

"There, there, dear heart; it may not be as bad as the boy says. Perhaps he was not in the mine."

"Dost 'ee think so, lass?" she cried. "Then I must go and see for myself."

She almost flew to the wall to take down her old shawl, but Alice clung to her, begging her not to injure another life beside her own. It was no use to plead; with a strength that was amazing she flung the slight girl against the doorway, and like a wounded deer sprang across the common.

As the long twilight gradually deepened into night a lurid glare shot into the sky that was fearful to look upon—a glare that seemed like the blood of the burnt colliers flooding and silently appealing to the very heavens.

Alice, thoroughly terror-stricken, hid her face in her hands, almost expecting to see an army of burning colliers rise from the depths of the "Ghost Pool" before the door. But holy angels bore up the soul of the trusting girl, and she lifted her eyes in momentary supplication to heaven. A strength born of that act was given her, and she arose almost firmly, bolted the door, placed a lighted candle in the window, undressed the sleepy twins, putting them in her own white bed, and in a low, trembling voice sang them to sleep with her favourite hymn.

CHAPTER V.

Moderate lamentation is the right of the dead; excessive grief to the enemy to the living.

All's Well That Ends Well.

It was near morning when Alice was startled by a heavy step outside the cottage, and a nervous rap at the door. Opening it, the haggard form of Mrs. Aspell tottered and almost fell into her arms. Alice was so thankful for her safe return that she softly wept as she unloosed with almost motherly care the poor creature's clothing, and prepared her some warm tea, which she passively swallowed. A stony calm pervaded her whole being, and as Alice persuaded her to lie down she also yielded to that, so passing several hours, giving no vent to her suffering but now and then a low moan. As the day wore along, then slowly waned, and the banner flame shot up through the night from the still-burning mine, she became so violent that Alice was obliged to run for the neighbours and a physician. When the latter arrived, and had examined his patient, he closed his lips tightly together, and answered the girl's questioning eyes by saying:

"I may save her life, but her mind, I am afraid, is a wreck."

They sat with her that night and part of the next day, with three strong men most of the time holding her down in her violence. Towards night she became a little calmer and asked:

"Is the blood in the sky yet?"

"The light is a little fainter to-night," they answered.

"Is it gone yet?" she asked, a few hours later.

"Very near," they answered.

The glare gradually sank to a dull red, and a fresh breeze passed through the heavy atmosphere as the dawn of a happier day approached, and Mrs. Aspell's little girl was born—a puny, rough-featured child, that had better been born dead the neighbours thought, but Heaven knew best.

They had been very kind to Mrs. Aspell in her great trouble, these poor neighbours; but there came a time to her that generally comes to all of us after a great affliction—a time when the excitement of the first shock has passed away and we are worn out struggling back to our former selves—a time when the charitable hand grows a little tired of giving, and sympathy finds more pitiful cases to lavish its wealth upon—a time that, like the time of death, we must fight through alone. Is it to be wondered at that in her shattered state of mind Mrs. Aspell refused the work offered her when she recovered from her illness, or became jealous of the comparative comfort—alas! how poor and struggling that comfort—of Alice and the twins? True, Alice helped her all she could out of her little store, but a poor Manchester factory girl with two children to support cannot perform many works of mercy, her heart ever so full of charity.

One night Alice awoke suddenly and found Mrs. Aspell bending over the twins with a look of fiendish hate, while her eyes were blazing with insanity. She held a large bread knife in her hand, and was in the act of sharpening it on the bed-post, when Alice called to her in a voice rendered as calm and quiet as her gentle mother would permit:

"Mrs. Aspell, what are you doing?"

The insane woman turned to Alice, calmed by the quiet voice, and answered as she gave a hollow laugh:

"I was a thinking, lass, what nice butcher meat they'd make."

Alice lay puzzled for a moment in her great extremity, then asked, in a seemingly natural way:

"Will you please give me a cup of water?"

"Ay," returned the woman, and left the room.

Alice sprang out of bed, latched the door, and, breaking the leg from a toy horse that stood near her, drove it into the hole above the latch to keep it from rising.

Mrs. Aspell returned with the water, but Alice called out:

"You needn't mind it, Mrs. Aspell. I felt cold and had to shut my door."

"Thee's afraid," the other shouted back, and violently shook the latch without moving it.

She then threw the cup, water and all, at the door, and began kicking and hammering at it with all mad strength.

Alice drew the old-fashioned bedstead, by a great exertion, against the door to securely barricade it, then, getting out of the window as noiselessly as possible, ran round to the door facing the "Ghost Pool" and firmly fastened it on the outside by drawing a sheet through the latch-handle and fastening each end to the iron staples that secured the window-shutters each side of the door.

So intent was Mrs. Aspell to break into Alice's room that she did not hear all this, nor see Alice watching her at one of the windows. Becoming exhausted with her mad efforts, and finding that the door did not give way, she violently dashed her head against it and fell back senseless, with the blood streaming from her mouth and nostrils.

Alice, being afraid to go to her, ran to the nearest neighbour and brought him to the scene of action.

"She hasn't died, lass," he said as he raised the poor creature from the floor and laid her beside her two children, who were now screaming with terror; "but I'd advise thee to make thy hoame wi' somebody else, if thee wants to live long."

The idea that the man put into words had of late brooded a good deal in the girl's mind; but she felt loth to leave the unfortunate widow to less merciful hands. The events of the night, however, forced her to see that it was worse than folly to remain, so she said to herself that she would pack up her poor things next day and leave Manchester altogether.

But the next day found Mrs. Aspell in full possession of her senses, though very weak, begging Alice to remain with her, if only for one week.

The gentle girl could not bear to inflict pain on any one, much less this broken woman, so she remained a week, and, being importuned again, still another and another, till Mrs. Aspell regained her mental faculties, and, taking up with some employment, earned herself and her children a livelihood.

Alice had grave doubts of her at times, and still meant to leave her when a favourable opportunity presented itself. Sooner than she imagined it would, this opportunity occurred, and it seemed one that

would relieve her of all her trials and give rest to her troubled soul.

CHAPTER VI.

In such a case as mine a man may strain courtesy.

Romeo and Juliet.

BLANCHARD HOUSE was finished, and a noble edifice it looked as its white granite walls glittered in the morning sunlight. The grounds were enclosed on the sides and front by a stone wall some eight feet high, and continued at the back to a carriage-house and domestic offices. Near the wall young, leafy trees were being planted, the intent being to shut out the world's vulgar gaze, as Miss Agnes expressed it. It had been Luke's work, under the gardener's direction, to plant the saplings destined for such an unsocial office, and during the performance he had learned from the gardener—a light-hearted, pleasant-spoken Scotchman, and a master of course the "best gardener out of Scotland"—the whole Blanchard history.

"I had a wee bit laund mysel' near Mr. Blanchard's farm, but I got the rheumatism and couldnae do the hard work, so Mr. Blanchard promised to gie me an' my auld woman employment for the rest o' our days. We dinna care, somehow, to heap up riches or make a cosyingle-side since our lad, Robert, ran awa'."

"How old was he?" asked Luke, interested in spite of himself by the quaint woe and cheerful tones of the narrator.

"He was nae more than twelve year old, pair laddie, and he ran awa' just because I corrected him for laughing at our meenister when the pulpit fell in as he was about to ask the blessing. I had braw work mysel' to keep me ain face straight, for the meenister was a wee bit fleshly and dignified. But an example had to be made of someone, soas Robert laughed the loudest I foll on him wi' a heavy hand. I have never seen the lad from that day to this, although all that scolding and advertizing could do weid. He's made an' wife wi' his mither, and she often comes out in the night for him yet. But, hoot! I began to tell ye about the Blanchard family, an' tellt' ye aboot me ain affairs. The Blanchards, as I understand, have dwelt in the colony for many generations, and were never detected doing any very hard work. They were honourable people, however, ye ken, and well to do in the world, the present gentleman being the poorest o' any of them."

"About four years ago Mr. Blanchard's only brother died, an' left him a large fortune under a very singular will. I cannae tell ye how it was singular, but this I ken, that the first thing the will obliged him to do was to build this house, wi' everything set down as it was to be done—even to the kind of stone, the number of rooms, and the varieties of flowers to be always kept in the conservatory. That's what makes Mr. Blanchard so anxious to get the place finished, for even that is in the will. They a' went to Europe as soon as the house was contracted for, and only returned four months ago wi' Miss Agnes, a fine-finished young lady. I remember her a wee lassie, that often kissed our lad Robert when he was a baby, 'cause he was so fair,' she said. A dainty lassie she was, wi' her delicate hands and pure white face, that might have been an angel if it hadn't been for her breed. Ay, mony a time I've watched her, as she grew older, lift her dress quietly around her, for fear o' it being touched by a passer-by. It's my firm faith that ye might tear her pure heart fra' her body before ye could make her degrade herself by one act unworthy of a woman."

Luke was thinking of another as beautiful, lacking the pride, so he did not hear the gardener the first time he asked:

"Isn't it a wonder that she found a gentleman high eno' to court her?"

"Yes," returned Luke, soberly; "I suppose it is."

"Ay, that's what I said myself, that the lassie was too proud to ha' a lover; but we cannae always tell. 'Freed goeth before a fall,' ye ken, though Heaven forbid that shod ever come to harm. I'll nae be long noo before we ha' the gay wedding in the new house, wi' a' the braw furniture and bonnie feasting."

"What's the gentleman's name?" asked Luke, out of sheer curiosity.

"I dinne ken wheather I'm reight or nae, but I'm o'en thinking it's ane John Moseley, o' Manchester, England."

"What ye ken the gentleman?"

"Do ye ken the gentleman?"

"Ay, mon, too, too, too well."

"I hope our young leddy hasn't made a bad choice," ejaculated honest John.

Luke involuntarily burst into loud execrations respecting him, who, he said, had spoilt his whole life.

"Nae, nae," broke in the gardener; "dinnae speak like that of yer fellow creatures. I have nae faith in any man that would do it, an', after hearing ye, I could nae believe a word ye said."

"If thee doan't, some one else may," said Luke, more to himself than the gardener.

But the Scotchman caught the words and pondered on the whole conversation many a year afterwards.

"If she'd only hear me," thought Luke as he lay down to rest that night, "I'd tell her the whole story, and save her from the fate that such a man would surely bring her—a life of misery, of contempt on her side, and insulting neglect on his. But I'm so rough and coarse that she'd never let me speak to her. If I could only write now: but perhaps she wouldn't read my letter, or, what's more likely, couldn't."

Luke laughed at his own poor joke, but before he slept made up his mind to see Miss Agnes, and, if possible, speak to her.

It was mild September weather, and Luke, with the first earnings he could spare, bought himself a new suit of clothes, thinking that Miss Agnes might then hear what he had to say. A little of the old spirit came into his face as surveying himself in the glass he laughed and said:

"Now, if I only knew how to read and write I'd be tip-top."

He had asked permission to leave his work this afternoon, and was somewhat grumbly spared by the gardener, for, although the house was finished and furnished according to contract and the will, there yet remained much to be done before the wedding could take place.

The family had not yet occupied the new house, but were still at Dodham, as Luke bargained with an old farmer to carry him thither in his wagon, that he might not appear travel-stained before the immaculate Miss Agnes.

"Mr. Blanchard and his daughter have gone on a visit to some friends," replied the woman who opened the door, when she had heard the young man's modest request to see Miss Agnes for a few minutes.

"When'll they be back?" asked Luke, dejectedly.

"Two weeks from to-morrow."

"Only four days before the wedding."

"Yes, sir."

"Well, thee can't help it, I suppose," he answered, but looked as though he thought she could as he turned away.

CHAPTER VII.

Farewell the tranquil mind! farewell content!

Othello.

THE wedding morn had come. Luke had been baffled in all his attempts to see Miss Agnes, but was now making rapid strides for Blanchard House. The marriage ceremony was to be performed at eleven o'clock; so after dressing himself Luke found he had little time to spare.

"Tell Miss Blanchard," he said to the servant, "that Luke Foul wishes to see her. It's more important than death."

"Miss Blanchard can see no one this morning."

"Please beg of her," entreated Luke. "If she only knew what it was she'd be thankful."

Sesing the man's earnestness the servant said he "would see," and left Luke standing in the hall while he held a whispered conversation with a young woman on the stairs, who said she "would see," and tripped away.

Miss Agnes was more gracious this particular morning than she had ever been in her life before.

"Luke Foul!" she repeated as the girl preferred the request. "Oh, yes; he was the honest 'mill-hand' that brought papa's glasses. I remember. I will see him in the library."

Poor Luke's heart beat painfully as the young woman returned and said he might follow her.

There was a splendid tiger-skin lying at the foot of the broad staircase, and Luke made a circuit to try and avoid it, thinking his unaccustomed feet might spoil the article, but was obliged to tread on it at last. The first few steps upstairs gave him great uneasiness, for, as the soft upholstery yielded beneath his feet, he imagined the stairs were giving way, and expected every instant to see himself in the collar.

Miss Blanchard stood in all the grandeur of her bridal attire, resting her hand on the centre-table as Luke awkwardly entered the room. He was abashed at her beautiful presence, and words seemed to die away from his tongue, but seeing her bright, innocent eyes upon him he began by saying:

"Young lady, if thee'll be kind enough to listen to me I want to save thee from that man as calls himself a gentleman and wishes to become thy lawful husband."

She raised herself at this, and her haughty head became haughtier, as she surveyed him with cold scorn

from head to foot, and, waving him away with her hand, said:

"Do you dare to impeach the character of Mr. Moseley? Leave the house, sir."

One with less of manhood in his soul would have sunk under the inexpressible gleam of her indignation; but Luke stopped her almost wildly, as, with uplifted hands he cried:

"Oh, Miss Blanchard! If thee knew the bitter wrong he did a poor girl in England—one of his father's mill-hands—if thee knew how he left her to die in want and misery, and the children to be a cause of disgrace and shame to her pure sister, she'd pause before thee'd lay thy hand in his. If thee knew that his name was dreaded by every honest girl and by many an unhappy father, she'd pause before thee'd let him even touch thy dress. If thee knew the mean, guilty soul his smooth face hides, thee'd scorn him as thou would a snake!"

She had turned deadly white, and the hand on her bosom trembled as she broke in, wildly:

"I cannot—will not believe such a scandalous tale! Such a base wretch as you describe to touch my hand—such a one to be my husband! You would not dare to say it to his face!"

"I would," said Luke, "and be glad to."

She touched a bell, sending such a loud silver clime through the house that all paused in their great preparations to listen—even John Moseley, putting the last touches to his toilet, started.

Presently a servant tapped at the door, with a request from Miss Blanchard to attend her in the library. He smilingly complied with the request, and entering the library confronted the agitated girl with astonishment.

"John," she said, "this young man," scornfully indicating Luke with her hand, "prefers a charge against you that I wish him to state in your presence. Not," she added, earnestly, "that I could stoop to believe such a direful scandal of you; but I wish the man to see he has made a mistake."

"Well, my man," said John Moseley, turning about and superciliously raising his gold-rimmed eyeglasses that he might the better see this phenomenon, "what have you to say?"

Luke was struck dumb for a moment, feeling like a tiger abhorred for blood, yet bound with immovable chains; such a look of deadly vengeance on his face that for an instant the other quailed as he recognized his father's mill hand. Like a flash of lightning, however, he recovered himself, and, seeing that Luke did not speak, asked:

"Can I do anything for you, my good man?"

"Nothing," replied Luke, hoarsely, "unless thee gives me back the life of Susan Grimes."

John Moseley winced, and to hide the agitation in his voice slowly drawled out:

"I could not do that, my good man, as I never knew such a person as Susan Grimes—I believe you said Grimes?"

"Ay, mon, I said Grimes," returned Luke, walking up to him and fixing his eyes upon him with a glance of concentrated passion, "and I know these of her death and desertion. Thou art the destroyer of my happiness; but I could forgive thee if thou hadst not dragged down another head to hang in shame for her sister's sin—one as pure as yonder lady. I couldn't rest easy and see this lady marry thee, thinking thou wert an honourable gentleman. If she likes to forgive thee, I hope Heaven will; but, as sure as Heaven above, if she ever misuses her, the day of thy retribution is at hand!"

So saying, he turned, made an awkward bow to Miss Blanchard, and left the room with far more grace than he had entered it.

"Pride goeth before a fall, and a haughty spirit before destruction."

The words seemed burning in letters of fire before the young girl's eyes as she wearily rested her head on her hands.

Some moments elapsed ere either spoke, then John Moseley rose, touched her lightly to fix her attention, and said, passionately:

"You believe it see."

She raised her eyes to his face, turned cold and steely since they last glanced at him, and spoke not a word.

He waited a minute for her to speak before he said:

"You are free if you wish it."

"Enough!" she answered, rising; "no one shall ever say that Agnes Blanchard broke her word."

And in her hard, cold beauty she swept from the room.

Better the broken word, she felt afterward, or better still had she freely forgiven, and tried to better him. He had been a wicked, wild man, but on this day had firmly purposed to begin a new life, guided by the woman whom, strange to say, he loved for her very purity.

Now she had thrown down his good resolutions,

and trampled them in the dust, and he felt himself afloat in the ocean that drifted to destruction.

Luke, plodding wearily home that breezy day, was haunted by the white face of Agnes Blanchard, and bitterly repented having spoken at all.

"What right had I to take the sunlight out of her life," he cried, "and make it dreary like my own? Heaven forgive me; I wish I had thought of that before."

CHAPTER VIII.

I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you.

Homily.

AFTER Agnes Moseley had gone to France on her wedding tour, and the Blanchards had quietly settled down in their new home, Mr. Blanchard found that he had little or nothing for Luke to do, and being loth to part with him—for he was a kind-hearted gentleman—cast about in his mind how he might find employment for such a worthy, painstaking young man.

He had intended to sell the farm at Dedham; but, having an affection for the place, kept putting it off from day to day, till, in the spring succeeding his daughter's marriage, the bright idea struck him that he would put Luke on the farm as managing man, and so be able to indulge in his favourite pastime of what John Hopkins termed "experiments."

On Luke's utter ignorance of farming matters he laid little stress, thinking that he could supply the place of teacher himself, and so mould his man to his own ideas.

Luke was delighted with the proposal, and when Mr. Blanchard's only difficulty seemed to be the getting of a suitable person to make the butter and keep house Luke told him of his sister and her independent escapade, adding:

"If thou'd like to have her, sir, she's as neat as she's quick-tempered, and that's saying a good deal; an' I'll search the factory towns over but what I'll find her, an', if she's willing, bring her here."

"It would be much better to have your sister," remarked the gentleman; "and as the spring is quite far advanced you had better begin your search at once."

"Now?" asked Luke, beginning to put on his coat as eagerly as a child going to buy a toy.

"I think you had better wait till to-morrow," answered Mr. Blanchard, smiling, and promising himself a willing help.

The first train next morning bore Luke on his mission, and he made for the first factory he saw, and, going into the office, asked if such a person worked there.

"Peel, Peel!" was the response; "I never heard of such an outlandish name. No, she don't work here."

"Never mind," thought Luke, "that's only the first one."

So, encouraging himself, he inquired again and again, with the same result, till three o'clock in the afternoon found him hungry and tired, but not altogether discouraged.

"I be a bit down in the mouth," he said to himself, as he sat down on a step to rest, "but I maunt gi' up—I'll find her yet."

He raised his head as he spoke, and saw a woman turn down the street opposite where he sat, with slow, lagging steps, as though disease had put on the breaks to prevent her from going too fast.

Luke was on his feet in a minute, and, catching up with her, said:

"Thee needn't try it on, Mary Jane—I know thee."

The woman turned at the words, expecting to see an angry face confronting her, and saw only the poor fellow standing there with the tears in his eyes and both hands stretched out towards her.

Exhausted by sickness and want of food, Mary Jane burst into tears.

"Never mind, lass," said Luke. "I've got a home to take thee to now—one that thee shall never leave, an' if theell take me to wherever thee lives I'll tell thee the whole story."

"Thou'st found me in misery," returned Mary Jane, coming back to her former ungracious self, "an' I suppose I'll have to give in. I became ill and lost my work, and so came down to my last shilling a week ago. I've just been to sell the only decent gown I've had to buy me bread."

"An' what would thee have done when that money was gone?" asked Luke, expecting to hear that she would have applied to him, but was soon disenchanted.

"I'd have locked my door an' lain there till they found me dead."

Mary Jane was the same; poverty and sickness had not bent her stubborn will, or obscured the vain glory that she misnamed independence. She had smarted under the rod, but remained unconquered—that task was reserved for gentle hands, that were at that very moment stretched out in baby anguish for food.

"I found her!" cried Luke, triumphantly, as he met Mr. Blanchard next day.

"I believe, my man, that you will do anything you undertake."

"No," replied Luke, slowly, "not anything, or I'd be a happy man to-day."

Mr. Blanchard, wondering at the strange sadness of the voice, looked at him and saw an intelligence of uncommon depth beaming out of his eyes.

Luke and his sister were conveyed to Dedham Farm without any possible delay, and together commenced their work, Luke's only regret at leaving the old place being the necessity of giving up the instructions of John Hopkins, who with a great display of erudition, but really good intentions, had offered to teach him to read and write.

Luke had been accustomed to spend his evenings in the gardener's neat little sitting-room over the coach-house, blundering over the alphabet and short words in spelling. He made slow progress, poor fellow, but though often saying to himself, "I be a bit down in the mouth," he never lost the resolution of yet mastering his task. It seemed like a great gap in the journey before him when he saw that he should have to resign his quick-tempered friend; but, thinking that Mr. Blanchard in his superior wisdom might see a way over it, he went to him and stated his case.

"I am sure I cannot think what you are to do," answered that gentleman, a little puzzled, yet solicitous to help this earnest endeavour. "You might find some one out there to teach you."

Luke looked blank at this proposal.

"You see," said he, "I be a big chap that doan't take kindly to every one maastering me."

"I know, I know," returned Mr. Blanchard, fully understanding the half-expressed feeling, "that's where the trouble lies. But trust to me and I'll contrive something by next week."

"John," said Mr. Blanchard, on the following Wednesday, walking down the garden to that individual, "I suppose you miss Luke about your work a little?"

"Ay, sir," replied the gardener, "I miss his outlandish talk."

"He seems to be a very worthy young man."

"Weel, I was divided in my opinion about him, for once I heard him execrate a man, but I'm e'en thinking noo but an uncanny spell was on him."

"You were very kind in teaching him to write, John."

John's breast swelled as he replied:

"It's me that I take preud out o' it, sir, but it is weel to be able to do it. Oh, the Sco-tch are a great people for education. I was sorry to let the laddie lose the privilege o' learning."

He had veered round to where Mr. Blanchard wished to have him, so that wily diplomatist quickly said:

"I think you had better take the chaise and go out there this evening, to see how he is getting along; and if you have an hour to spare you might give him a lesson. You have no need to hurry home."

"Thank you, sir," said John, as glad of the holiday as to have his scholarly attainments taken notice of.

The evening sun with a last effort was flickering on Mary Jane's white, sanded kitchen floor, and dancing among her rows of shining tin pails, when the gardener put his head into the doorway and asked, in a cheery voice:

"How have ye bin the day?"

"I suppose it's Luke you want," replied Mary Jane, unceremoniously.

"Ay, if he's about I'll come in."

"I'll call him," she returned, looking wrathfully at a little mud that had fallen from John's boots.

Luke was busy in the garden, but, hearing Mary Jane's screech, came quickly in, giving John such a hearty shake of the hand that he was forced to exclaim:

"Eich, mon, y'e'en almost crack-ed the bones."

"This is my sister, Mary Jane," said Luke.

The individual alluded to, being busy with a floor cloth and fine sand erasing the offending foot-marks, merely gave the Scotchman an ungracious nod.

"How has it been?" asked John, after a while, "wi' the crooked sprawls ye made i' the co-py-book?"

"I don't think they're much straighter," laughed Luke; "but I've been trying a little spelling on my own account."

With a jubilant but half-bashful air he took John to the back door to show him what he deemed a piece of ornamental painting.

"An' wha'd ye call that?" asked the gardener.

"Why, y'see," explained Luke, beginning to look rather dubious, "I was so glad to get sun'at of a hoame that I thought it was all I could desire, an' so I writ on the door 'my desire.'

"An' d'y'e no' ken how to spell it better than m-i-d-e-s-c-r-e? Hoot upon sic a pupil."

Luke bore the gardener's sarcastic denunciations with great humility, fully believing that he deserved still harsher treatment, and thought he must be a little stricter with himself in the future. To keep him humble-minded, he determined to leave the misspelt words on the door as long as the weather permitted them to remain, which was not long, for the last letter being very poorly done was washed out by the first rain storm; and the neighbours, quite baffled in any attempt to elicit information from "that queer Englishman," came to the conclusion that he had called the old farm "My Desert," and as such it began to be known among them.

Thus a year and a half passed away, and found Luke, with his unswerving steadiness, able to read and write in quite a respectable manner. No Wednesday had passed in that time but what Mr. Blanchard had found an excuse to send John to the farm, his pretence being that the family needed vegetables, fresh butter, or eggs; and, being delighted with the manoeuvres that he thought no one saw through, he took great interest in Luke's improvement.

Since their departure from England the brother and sister had never received a word of information from their former home, and Luke, hesitating to write till he could do so in a masterly manner, now began to think that he would undertake the task. His heart was hungry for a word of love from the poor girl he had left behind him, and hoping, by the glowing accounts he should send her of the new home, to be able to induce her to join him in it, he, with great preparation and sundry snaps from Mary Jane for having stained her white table, began by making a great blot on his only sheet of writing-paper.

Just then the grating sound of wheels was heard outside, and John Hopkins unceremoniously opened the door. His smile was less cheerful than usual, and his voice had a touch of sympathy in it as he asked:

"How are ye a' the night? Ye were no expecting me," he added, when seated by the blazing wood fire—for it was winter-time; "but ye ken I was at the post-office this morning for Mr. Blanchard, an' saw there was a letter for ye."

A tide of excitement leaped into Luke's face as he eagerly asked:

"Didst thee bring it, mon?"

"Dinna be fashed, for I'm e'en thinking there's uncanny news for ye."

So saying, he drew from his pocket a letter deeply bordered with black.

CHAPTER IX.

I must not have you henceforth question me
Whither I go, nor reason whereabout.

1 Henry IV.

LUKE did not dare to touch the letter at first, but sat looking at the scrawling address in a kind of dumb terror:

"mr luke peel,

Australia, Melbourne."

"It can't be from Alice," he said, presently; "for that ain't her writing."

"Thee'd better open it and see," broke in Mary Jane, who had been gazing at the postmark in fond delight.

Luke tore open the envelope, and two letters fell in his lap. He took up the first and read:

"MY DEAR LUKE,—I write to tell you I'm dying. You once said that if Heaven saw fit to take me away, you would be a father to the poor children. I cannot feel resigned to die, knowing they have no one in the world to give them bread; so, in Heaven's name, I ask you to take them, and do by them as your kind heart tells thee to do. I would like to see your good face once more, but I know it's impossible. My end is very near. I am worn out with work and sorrow, and I am glad to die. Don't try to come and see me, for I shall be at rest before you can get here. As you will see, I don't write the letter myself—I'm too weak. Martha Bambridge, a neighbour, writes it, and will send it to you. She will keep the children till you come. I cannot write any more. Good-bye for ever,

ALICE GRIMES."

"P.S. I beg of you and Heaven to forgive me for asking you to take the children, but remember it is the last resource of one who feels as a dying mother."

The small note merely stated that, two days after dictating the letter, she had expired in the arms of the neighbour who now forwarded it.

"I can't believe it!" cried Poor Luke, in a stupor. Then he sat for a long time without making any other comment.

The conviction that it was true seemed to force itself upon him at last, for he arose, and, regardless of Mary Jane or the gardener, walked with unsteady gait to his room.

Mary Jane was up at dawn next day, but she found Luke already in the kitchen, preparing to start for Melbourne—the light and hope of youth gone out of his face, leaving it a blank to look upon.

"Art thee going to Melbourne?" she asked, in a wonderfully soft voice.

Hard as she was, she was sorry for her brother's grief, bringing back as it did her own youthful disappointment.

"I'm going," he answered, without turning round.

"What?" she cried, "and leave me here?"

"Don't worry, lass, I'll settle everything for thee, and get sum un to keep thy company for awhile—I won't be gone long."

"Why art thee going?" she asked, in the stifled voice that always precluded her fits of passion.

"To bring Susan Grimes's children back with me to adopt as my own."

"And me to work for them?"

"Yes."

"Never!"

The word was almost a shriek.

Luke had been used to evade Mary Jane's tattums by leaving the house, or ignoring her presence in some occupation; but to-day he was a changed man, and, turning on her with a steady voice, but unmistakable gleam in his brown eyes, he said:

"Look thee here, Mary Jane, thou'ret my sister, but I'm master here, and, if thee doan't wish to do my will, we part."

For a wonder, the fiery woman was silent, and dropped her eyes; finding that Luke was not to be beaten, she wisely gave up the reins and bent her will to his.

No sooner had Luke left the house than he regretted his harsh words, and felt disposed to turn back and mitigate them; but knowing her disposition he saw it would only be a concession of power, and drove away.

He did not expect, however, to find such a welcome home as awaited him when he returned at night—in the shape of an over-bountiful supper, an extra furnishing of the kitchen utensils, and a general gleam of hospitality about the very furniture that inanimate objects can be made to give. Still Mary Jane was silent, vouchsafing only the shortest monosyllables in reply to his remarks.

He told her that he should start for England in two days, and that, with Mr. Blanchard's permission, the gardener and his wife would come and stay with her while he was gone.

"I won't be long away, lass," he continued; "for England won't seem much like a home to me now Alice is gone. Thee must make up thy mind, too, to prepare for the children, as I shall never marry now, nor have anything to look forward to in my old age but them. Perhaps Heaven will bless us in them, to make up for the sufferings of our early days."

Mary Jane made no reply, but there was a perceptible choke in her throat that she tried hard to quell.

The morning that Luke was to sail for England broke in storm and sleet, accompanied by a low, moaning wind. Not very encouraging weather to start on a long journey, but it mattered little to him, only that it seemed more in unison with his depressed state of mind.

Mary Jane bade him a gruff farewell, and shut the door quickly to keep out the rain; but, once by herself, she gave vent to a passionate fit of crying.

When Luke had been at sea for a day or two, and the first shock of his bereavement had in a measure passed away, his thoughts naturally took a speculative turn.

How had she died? What was her disease? Had she loved him to the last? or had her love ebbed away with her failing health?

It was bitter weather, and the deck generally remained deserted by all save Luke. No matter if his rough coat was often frosted with spray, the large, silent figure stood at the bulwarks watching the riotous waves. Over and over again he pondered these questions, thinking this and that, till at last he believed the whole to be a tramped-up story, and that he should find Alice alive and well when he arrived in England. It was not the sort of letter for her to have written to him on her death-bed, he thought. The gentle girl would have sent a few loving sentences for him to remember till the day of his death—even though she had no feeling left for him in her heart but pity.

This new phase of the affair began to take such hold of him, and so changed his face, that the other passengers took to noticing it, and a little sick child that loved to sit and watch his strong, good face timidly touched his arm one day, when he was in his favourite position, and asked, in a baby voice:

"Do 'ey talk to 'ou?"

"Who, baby?" said Luke, taking her in his arms.

"Zhem."

And the little fingers pointed to the waves.

"Yes, yes," and an absent-minded gloom fell upon him. "Perhaps it was them that told me she was alive."

"Does 'ou love her?"

For answer he kissed the little rosy mouth, and carried her back to her mother, who sat smiling at the child's faculty of getting acquainted.

Luke now began making inquiries of the captain how soon he expected to arrive at Liverpool, and every morning strained his eyes to catch a glimpse of land. Failing in this endeavour, he would turn to one of the passengers and ask him how much farther he thought they had got since last night, and how many more miles they had to go. He became assiduous in helping the sailors, and greatly concerned in the working of the vessel, his whole desire, apparently, being to get the vessel safely and quickly into port.

Never did a glimpse of native land bring a keener delight to any heart than the first sight of England did to Luke. How he watched the curves in the misty shore, and the wild waters eddying over some stray rock. He sat up all night thinking to be the first to land, but a great fog had settled over the sea, and, wearied with the strain on his mind, towards morning he fell into a long, deep sleep. He awoke with a noise and confusion overhead, and a sense of something that he had been accustomed to missing—it was the motion of the vessel, she was lying at the wharf in Liverpool.

CHAPTER X.

I never did repeat for doing good,

Nor shall not now.

Merchant of Venice.

LUKE was up and on deck before his eyes were fairly open, and as soon as he got clear of the vessel it did not take him long to get to the railway station. But as he had to wait for a couple of hours for a train it was evening when he entered the smoky city of Manchester—evasive, and the long twilight as he passed under the railway arch in Livesey Street, down the familiar Rochdale road, and across the common towards the poor cottage in front of the "Ghost Pool." How little and mean it looked, he thought, and not that alone but everything seemed to have a soot-bogrime, blotted look. His feet so trembled under him, as he neared the small abode, that he was forced to stop awhile, and think the whole affair over, telling himself that she was in that very cottage, and would soon speak to him, showing him by her own sweet presence that the story of her death was false. Without pausing for farther thought, he rapped hastily at the door, and raised the latch before any one could come to open it.

An old woman sat there with two children. That was all he saw as he dropped into the nearest seat.

"Oh, how d'you do, sir?" cried the old woman, barely rising from her chair, when she sat down again. "You don't seem to mind of me, sir. I'm Martha Bambridge."

"Yes, yes," he answered, impatiently, "I remember you; tell me of Alice Grimes."

"Law, sir! didn't thee get the letter I sent, telling of her death?"

"Yes, I got the letter," he said, and paused wearily, then asked, abruptly, "Was it true?"

The old woman jumped from her seat, trembling all over at the sudden question, and asked, in a quaking voice:

"Dost 'eo think I'd not tell thee the truth? What 'ud be my gain? I think it's enough to have kept those two young uns since her death."

"Are these the children?" asked Luke, turning towards the two dirty specimens before him.

"Yes, them's the ones."

"The boy seems sum'at larger than the girl, seeing they're twins."

"Boys are allers more for'ard than girls."

Luke took this lucid explanation of the slight difference in the children's sizes all in good faith, and inquired where they had buried Alice.

"In Harpurhay cemetery," replied Martha. "Dost 'eo want to know owght else?"

Luke did want to know all she had to tell, but the woman seemed so devoid of any sympathetic feeling that he refrained from asking her anything more that night. He proposed, however, that she should accompany him to Harpurhay next morning, and point out Alice's grave. As he rose to go, Luke thought of Mrs. Aspell, and asked what had become of her.

"Law now, didst 'ee never hear as how she went raving, crazy mad and killed her two children?"

"Mad?" ejaculated Luke.

"Yes, sir, after her mon was burnt in the Moseley mine, which exploded, and nearly ruined the Moseley family."

"Is the mill running yet?"

"Not it; it bean't working for the last twel'month, and old Moseley and his wife are living somewhere in the country quite broken down loike."

Luke proposed to return to Australia with the greatest expedition, and, upon inquiry, found that he could do so in a few days. After making all his arrangements, and carefully counting over the little stock of money he had brought with him, Luke, to-

gether with Martha Bambridge, set out in the omnibus for Harpurhay.

How the well-remembered fields and little stone cottages on the way smote his heart—places that he and Alice together had gazed upon—deep, shady lanes where they had taken long Sunday walks, and simple Alice had gathered the sweet, pink-edged English daisy. But how changed it all seemed now that she walked no more with him. The yellow sunshine might brood over the fields and lift up the faces of the primrose and cowslip in the dells—might brighten the edges with the pink-tinted buds of the May blossoms—but it could not brighten her weary life into any seeming of joy. Oh, a sad welcome home had poor Luke to his native land!

"I think as this is the place," said Martha, after hunting about in a doubtful sort of way.

She pointed as she spoke to a large, long mound of newly heaped earth, very unlike a grave, but resembling the trenches made on a battle-field to bury the dead.

As Luke looked surprised and greatly depressed she hastened to explain:

"You see as 'ow she couldn't afford a grave all by herself, so they put her coffin in one hole with many others."

But the only apparent head he took of her words was to awkwardly hand her the omnibus fare, and tell her he would like to stay there awhile.

She accepted the money reluctantly, having a vague suspicion that he meant to dig up the body and look at it; but was greatly relieved, as she watched from a hiding-place, to see him only kneel down on the grave and bow his head on his breast—then solemnly raise his hand towards Heaven, as though making a vow.

When he returned to the cottage the children were ready, dressed in their poor best, waiting for him, for he intended to remain in Liverpool till the vessel sailed.

When they were all ready to start Martha Bambridge produced from the bosom of her dress two soiled and crumpled letters, and, handing them to Luke, said:

"She as laysoop at Harpurhay told me to give thee these, and say as 'ow she wanted you never to tell the children who they were till they were twenty years old, and then thea was to give 'em these."

"How old are they now?" asked Luke.

"Three years come next Whit'suntide."

"Seventeen years to come," mused Luke as he carefully placed the letters in his breast pocket, and, for the first time, thought, with dismay, of the task he was imposing upon himself.

Seventeen years! Where would he be then? What if death should bereave the children a third time, and leave them to the tender mercies of Mary Jane?

When it came to the point of starting the children showed some repugnance at going with Luke, but he tried his best to coax them, saying:

"Come with Uncle Luke, for you're all the legacy he had to leave me."

(To be continued.)

UNCLE PAUL'S WHIM.

"THEY would get married," said Uncle Paul, grimly. "It isn't my fault that their husbands are dead, and they're left with families to bring up. I advised them to stay single."

"But it would be your fault," said the mild clergyman, "if they starved or suffered."

"I don't see why."

"Because you have plenty of this world's goods, and they are poor; because you have but yourself to support, and they have little ones dependent on them."

"Oh, fudge!" said Uncle Paul. "I don't keep a poor-house, and I'm sure I pay sufficient taxes and contribute to charitable institutions enough to free me from any extra demands. I told both of them how it would be; but Hester was always a self-willed creature, and Letitia had a quiet fashion of insisting upon having her own way, which was quite as bad in the long run."

"Very well," said the clergyman, "I can't pretend to argue with you upon the subject. I only state facts, and leave the rest to your own conscience."

Saying which he went his way.

Uncle Paul took up his pen and recommended writing entries in the fat old ledger which lay on the desk; but, for all that, the rose-bud faces of his nieces, Hetty and Letty, as they used to look fitting around his big arm-chair, would continue to haunt him.

"Phaw!" he exclaimed, at last, as he dropped his pen, making a great, apoplectic ink blot on the middle of the page. "I wish that meddling minister had been obliging enough to mind his own business. I suppose I must do something for one of them at least, but which shall it be? Hetty used to have the prettier face and the more coaxing

voice, but then Letty had a still, velvet-footed way of always doing just what you wanted before you fairly knew it yourself. Hetty sang like a lark all the old-fashioned songs I liked best to hear, but Letty would play backgammon by the hour, and never get tired of the rattle of the old man's dice-box. Well, well, it's hard to make a choice."

A week elapsed, and Letitia Carver sat alone by the desolate hearth-stone sewing, her little ones at school, the fire subdued to the fewest lumps of coal consistent with calorific life, when the door opened, and her cousin, the other young widow, entered, also in deep black.

"Isn't it a shame?" cried Mrs. Hewitt, indignantly. "Of course you received a bundle too?"

"I don't think I quite understand what you mean, Hetty," said Mrs. Carver.

"Mean? I mean that Uncle Paul Sheffield is the stingiest, most parsimonious old miser in existence. To dare to send a bundle of old clothes to my door, as if I were a common beggar, with an insulting note, stating that, as he had understood I had two boys, I might very easily cut the garments up into something useful. I declare to you, Letty, I was so angry that I cried!"

"Angry? What for? I am sure the clothes are very nice, only little old-fashioned, and I can get quite a new suit out of them for each of my little men. Paul and Robbie are both small, and—"

"Letty Carver!" cried her cousin, wrathfully, "you have no more spirit than a wooden image!"

Hester smiled and shook her head mournfully.

"I cannot sit tamely by, Hester, and hear my little ones crying with cold and hunger!"

"Phaw!" said Hetty, imperiously. "I am not yet reduced to be the recipient of such charity as that, from a man like Uncle Paul, who rolls in gold."

"It is his own money, Hetty, and he has a right to do with it as he pleases. When you and I married against his wishes we both tacitly abandoned all claim to his wealth."

"I don't agree with you there," said Mrs. Hewitt, haughtily tossing her head. "You've actually begun to rip up the odious old things!"

"See," said Letty, holding up the section of a well-worn waistcoat, with a faint smile. "I am dilligently at work at it now!"

"I sold mine to a rag-man for a pair of china vases," said Mrs. Hewitt, indifferently. "Horrid, tawdry things they were; only fit for the children to play with and break, but still better than nothing at all. What's that you are taking out of the pocket?" she added, with a quick start. "A ten-pound note?"

Mrs. Carver unfolded at the same moment a tiny slip of crumpled paper, tucked far down into one of the pockets. It actually was, as her cousin had said, a ten-pound note.

"You are in luck!" cried Hetty. "I wish I had thought to look into the pockets of mine before I let the rag-man have them; but it isn't at all likely that the old skinflint would make more than one mistake of the kind. What shall you do with it, Letty?"

"Do with it?" repeated Mrs. Carver, opening her mild eyes in surprise. "I shall take it to Uncle Paul at once. It is, as you yourself say, a mistake."

"But he has given you the suit."

"He never intended to give me the money, Hester, and I have no right to appropriate it," Letty answered.

Mrs. Hewitt drew a long breath of contemptuous amazement.

"Letty Carver, you are too absurdly Quixotic for anything. You don't deserve good luck if you fling it about after this fashion."

"I certainly should not deserve good luck if I acted dishonestly in even so small a matter as this."

"I don't call ten pounds a small sum to you, whatever it may be to Uncle Paul. Take my advice, Letty—keep the money and hold your tongue. You need it and he doesn't, and he never will be a bit the wiser. What are you tying on your bonnet for?"

"I am going to Uncle Paul," was the quiet reply as Mrs. Carver folded a faded black cashmere shawl across her slender shoulders.

"You are determined?"

"Yes."

"Then I'll go with you," said Hetty Hewitt. "Perhaps between us both we can manage to shame the old scoundrel out of a little of his surplus cash."

"Hetty!"

"I mean it, Letitia. He used to pretend to be fond of us—"

"Until we set his wishes and judgment at defiance, and proclaimed ourselves entirely independent of his will."

Hester Hewitt shook her head; her wilful nature was entirely unconvinced, but she abandoned the argument temporarily.

Uncle Paul Sheffield sat alone at his desk when his office-boy announced:

"Two ladies, sir."

"Well, girls!" said Uncle Paul, sticking his pen behind his ear as composedly as if it had been only six days since he had seen them, instead of six years. "Sit down—sit down!"

Mr. Hewitt obeyed, but Letty Carver advanced to her uncle's desk and laid the ten-pound note upon its blotted surface of green baize. Uncle Paul surveyed her from behind the moon-like orbs of his silver-mounted spectacles

"Eh, what's this?" he asked, with apparent unconsciousness. "What's this?"

"You were kind enough, Uncle Paul," began Letty, hesitatingly, "to send me some clothes to make up for the children. I found this money in the waistcoat pocket when I was ripping it up this morning."

"You did, eh?" said Uncle Paul, reflectively. Then, turning his spectacles suddenly on his other niece, he demanded, with embarrassing abruptness:

"You, Mrs. Hester!—what became of the ten-pound note that was in the waistcoat pocket of your bundle, eh?"

Hester hesitated, turned first scarlet, then pale, and was obliged to stammer forth:

"I—I didn't suppose I could make the old garments useful, so I sold them to a rag-man."

"For a shilling?"

"No, uncle; for two nice china vases."

"Two flagree fiddlesticks!" barked Uncle Paul, sharply. "Too shiftless to make up a good suit of only half-worn clothes—too proud to work for your own living, but not too sensitive to expect others to do it for you—too haughty to accept charity—you're the same Hetty that you always were! Even the sea of trouble you have gone through hasn't changed you, and I don't believe anything will but death."

"Uncle!" faltered Hetty, beginning weakly to cry, the worst pity she could possibly have adopted if she had only known it.

"Yes," went on Uncle Paul, rumpling his hair over his eyebrows; "I put the two notes in the two waistcoat pockets to try you two girls. One of them is sold to a ragman, the other has come back to me. I accept the omen. Letty, my lass, you and your little ones may return to the old nest again. If the boys are like you I shall take to them."

"But, uncle," whispered Hetty Hewitt through her tears, "what shall I do?"

"Sell yourself to the ragman for a match-box to match your china vases!" quoth the old man, waxing grimly facetious. "Don't tell me I'll have nothing more to do with you?"

No tears or entreaties on the part of either Hetty or Letty could move the old man's adamant resolve. Hetty had sealed her own doom past redemption, and her more thrifty cousin had become a presumptive heiress, all through Uncle Paul's whim.

A. R.

SWEET EGLANTINE;

OR,

THE STRANGE UNKNOWN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "EVANDER," "HEART'S CONTENT," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XVII.

"Prophet," said I; "thing of evil, prophet still if bird or devil, Whether tempter sent or whether tempest toss thee here ashore Desolate, yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted, On this house by horror haunted, tell me truly, I implore, Is there—is there balm in Gilead? tell me, tell me, I implore."

Quoth the raven, "Never more."

The Raven.

So lightly did Egantine breathe that her presence was not suspected by the other occupants of the room, who continued to talk as if they were perfectly alone. Poor child! It was a terrible trial to her to know that she was amongst her father's enemies, and that Everard Bourne was one of the number. She could not have thought that the soul she believed so loyal could plot against her father's happiness; but she had yet to learn that there was some excuse for Everard. He had joined the order of the Iron Cross, and made himself the slave of its grand master, in the hope that, as a reward for his services, the companions would work for him in some mysterious way and make him the husband of Egantine, whom he fondly loved. It was, too, in a moment of madness and delirium brought about by her rejection of his advances that he had yielded to the tempter.

General Tahourdin again addressed Everard, saying:

"So far so good; now, with regard to the other matter, did you ascertain if my information respecting a sum of money borrowed some years ago by Captain Passingham from a Portsmouth attorney named Simpson was correct?"

"I did," answered Everard Bourne. "The sum was a thousand pounds. Mr. Simpson received me kindly, and gave me all the particulars I desired. He lent this money, which in amount was at first what I have stated, though it has grown larger by the accumulation of interest. The captain went into the country when he left the service, and Simpson could never discover his whereabouts. He is under the impression that the captain thinks him dead; but he took the precaution to get a judgment against his debtor, and I am told that judgment debts are not barred by the statute, so that the claim holds good."

"Did you offer to purchase it?"

"Yes. Mr. Simpson will sell it to you for half its value, not calculating the interest at five per cent., so that if you give him five hundred pounds you will have the power of throwing the captain into prison until the whole amount is paid."

"That shall be done without delay," replied General Tahourdin. "You have accomplished your tasks excellently. Passingham shall be arrested for debt and thrown into the county jail, where he will languish while I complete my preparations for a criminal prosecution. In prison he will not be so well able to see his friends and organize measures for his defence."

The flickering glare of the fire light showed that Everard Bourne turned pale.

"I did not know," he exclaimed, "that you had any vindictive feeling against Captain Passingham, or I would not have collected this information for you. He is the father of the girl I love. How can I approach her again when I am the destroyer of her parent?"

"She will never know that," returned General Tahourdin. "You are perfectly safe there. My plan is this. When Passingham is in prison for debt I will communicate with the girl and tell her that if she will marry you her father shall be set free, and I will forego the debt which he cannot pay. As to the estate from which he derives his income it is in Chancery, and until the law business is over he has only an annual sum sufficient to live upon and sue counsel. She must consent, because she loves you, and only refuses to be your wife from a silly sentimental feeling. When Passingham is released I shall have completed my preparations for the prosecution, and he will be again arrested, then on a criminal charge. Do you see?"

"The plan is feasible," said Everard, thoughtfully. "And will succeed."

"I am not prepared to say that it will not, though I cannot see how Eglantine can enjoy any happiness while her poor father is thus environed with difficulties. I wish I had had nothing to do with it."

"Would your refusal to comply with my orders have made any difference in the completion and progress of my scheme of vengeance?" asked the general, derisively. "Would not any of the companions of the Iron Cross have executed my commands as willingly and as well as yourself?"

"That is true."

"It pleased me that the blow should come through you. When the proper time comes I shall visit him in prison, while he is wearing the dress of a felon, and the iron is eating into its soul, and I shall tell him how you hunted him down. Any additional pang that I can inflict upon him will give me pleasure."

"I presume you will consider it an impertinent question," continued Everard, "if I ask you why you hate Captain Passingham with such relentless force."

"I have my reasons for it, and they are good and substantial ones," replied the general, whose face became as black as night. "If—"

He paused abruptly.

"You were about to observe—" said Everard, fearing to lose the communication.

"No matter," answered General Tahourdin. "Possibly you will know some day. I am not now in the humour to publish my own shame. Ask me no more, but know this—I would rather relinquish my hopes of eternal bliss than give up what I consider my just revenge upon this man."

Everard shuddered. There was something awful in this implacability. It took his breath away, and made him tremble when he thought how perilous it would be to incur such resentment. With the machinery he had under his command Tahourdin could follow any one to the uttermost parts of the earth.

"I may not be very religious myself," said Everard, hoping to mitigate the general's resentment. "But I have heard that vengeance belongs to a mightier power than any on earth. The grandest victory a man can obtain is one over his passions. To err is human, to forgive divine."

"I will never forgive," said the general, in so fierce and determined a voice that Everard did not think it advisable to continue the conversation.

"Have you any farther instructions for me?" asked

Everard, after another pause of longer duration than the first.

"No. I have simply to thank you for your zeal, and to request that you will return to your property in the country, and there await my instructions. As soon as possible I will put in action my plan to make you the husband of Eglantine Passingham. This evening, if you will do me the honour to dine with me, you shall be welcome to my family circle."

Everard Bourne thanked General Tahourdin in becoming terms for the invitation, and accepted it. The general went to order lights, and excused himself for leaving his guest in comparative darkness for a short space.

This was Eglantine's opportunity.

Emerging from her place of security, she glided so noiselessly to Everard that he thought he was confronted by a spirit when she stood before him, and, laying her little hand lightly on his shoulder, said:

"Everard! It is I—Eglantine. Not a word. You must not betray me."

"You hor in the house of your father's enemy? Impossible!" replied Everard, astonished.

"I was ignorant of the fact. I would that there was the same excuse for you," she answered, re-proachfully.

"I did not mean to injure Captain Passingham," said Everard. "My joining the society of the Iron Cross was an accident, pure and simple, and I would not have done what I have if I had known I was being instrumental in injuring him. My impression was that I was collecting information for—for—I scarcely know why. I did not give it a thought. I was half mad at the time, and you were the cause of my madness."

"No going back—not recalling the past—no reproaches, Everard," replied Eglantine. "We are yet dear to each other, but you have succeeded in widening the gulf between us. You spoke truly when you said you could not face the daughter when you had destroyed the father."

"But this terrible man!—it is he!"

"You were the passive agent in his hands; undo your work!"

"I cannot. My oath to the society makes me his slave. I can do nothing openly, though I may work in secret. I am rich, and if he wants money to pay this debt he shall receive it from an unknown friend, and so escape the toils."

"My father will not do that; I know him too well, and I have learnt enough to-night to unnerve the strongest of my sex. The general will return soon. I must go. I am here as the companion of his daughter—her governess in fact—and left home through persecution which I have not time to explain now. If we meet at the dinner-table or in the drawing-room we must do so as strangers. I hear footsteps. Adieu!"

"Do we meet and part like this, Eglantine?" he said, seizing her hand and trying to detain her.

"You must not, please; let me go!" she cried, in a subdued tone.

Extricating her hand from his reluctant grasp, she quitted the apartment just in time, for as she put her foot on the last stair of the staircase General Tahourdin passed her.

"Is that you, Miss Langley?" he said.

"Yes. I am going to dress for dinner," she replied.

"That's right, and if you have a smart dress that you keep for great occasions put it on. I have a handsome young fellow coming to dine with me this evening. By-the-way, see that Constantia looks her best, will you?" the general said, in a significant tone, adding, "You understand."

She did understand, and, muttering a few words of affirmation, hurried upstairs with a beating heart, supporting herself at times by the banisters. Her bed-room was near Constantia's, and the latter used frequently to pay her a visit while she was dressing, as it was always pleasant to talk to Eglantine, and there was something to be learnt from the neatness of her habits and the general taste with which she dressed.

When she reached her room she sat down upon a sofa at the foot of the bed and buried her face in her hands. Constantia was to be made to look her best to captivate Everard. The general could not have acted more harshly to Eglantine if he had known her to be Captain Passingham's daughter. He was treacherous too. While professing to be willing to help Everard to a marriage with Eglantine he was plotting other things.

That General Tahourdin was her father's enemy—that enemy whom he so much dreaded, and of whom he had spoken at the dinner which we described at the commencement of this story—she had no doubt. It was indeed a strange chance which had led her to seek a shelter in his house, but Providence moves in an inscrutable way, and she always placed herself with meek resignation in the hands of

that power which had hitherto protected her, and she sincerely trusted, would continue to do so.

She felt quite confused and overwhelmed with the discovery she had made and the strange meeting with Everard, whom her heart told her she loved with more intensity than before.

The door opened and Constantia entered the room.

"I will tell her to dress well, and Everard shall judge between us. Oh, I have no fear of her rivalry," thought Eglantine. So she told Constantia to make herself look attractive, while she herself took no pains whatever with her toilet, relying upon her natural grace and beauty.

"You look quite pale to-night—are you not well, dear?" said Constantia, who felt all a sister's fondness for her governess.

"No; I have a headache, and if I did not think the general would want me to sing and play I should excuse myself."

This was not strictly true. It was a pleasure to Eglantine to be near her beloved, and if she had had scarcely strength enough to walk she would have gone down to dinner in order to see and be near him.

They met at dinner, but as strangers. Everard was introduced to "Miss Langley," my daughter's governess," and he made a formal bow, remembering what she had requested of him. Constantia did her best to please, but she was disappointed to find that Everard's glance more frequently strayed in Eglantine's direction than hers, though he was scrupulously polite to both of them.

In the evening both girls sang and played, Eglantine trying always to show Constantia off to the best advantage, only once herself singing a plaintive ballad which brought the tears into her lover's eyes, and made him so miserable that he took his leave very early, unable to remain in her presence any longer on the distant terms which she and circumstances had imposed.

Eglantine slept little that night. She was puzzling herself to devise some means of saving her father. It was clear to her that General Tahourdin loved his daughter as his life—he could not put her enough, and frequently he regretted the loss of his boy at sea, saying he should be happy if this son and heir to the name and property of Tahourdin had lived.

If she could persuade Constantia to run away from her father's house with her and keep her secret she thought she might induce the general—hard and stony-hearted as he was—to forego his revenge upon Captain Passingham, in order to recover his dearly loved child.

Of course this was conjecture, and the task was a difficult one. First of all she had to persuade Constantia to go away; secondly she had to find a place to take her to. In the first of these difficulties she was materially assisted by the chance of Everard Bourne's visit to the house.

Constantia fell desperately in love with him.

She said she had never seen such a handsome man, and there might have been a great deal of truth in this, as Everard was very good-looking; and the guests invited to General Tahourdin's house were not numerous.

The misfortunes which had overtaken her father had made Eglantine deceitful. She regretted it, but she could not help it. For instance, she was deceitful when she represented herself to be Miss Langley. Equally was she so when she met Everard Bourne as a stranger, and now she would be obliged to deceive Constantia in order to induce her to leave her father's home.

Constantia perhaps would not have given way to her romantic passion for Everard so utterly as she did if she had not been encouraged thereto by Eglantine, who represented him as very charming, and told her that she would experience little difficulty in obtaining his heart if she followed her advice.

A few days after Everard's visit the young ladies were together in the boudoir. Lessons were put on one side, for Constantia had said:

"Do talk to me about that darling Everard."

"We have talked for hours ever since he was here, every day we have spoken of him," rejoined Eglantine.

"I must see him again," continued Constantia. "You will think me very foolish and weak and romantic; but that you do already. The only new phase in my character is the romance, that you did not suspect. But I must see him again."

"I happen to know where he lives," said Eglantine. "Do you?" cried Constantia, jumping up from her chair. "Oh! you dear creature, do—do tell me."

"It is very odd, but Mr. Bourne conceived a fancy for you at the same time that you inspired a liking for him," rejoined Eglantine, "for he took advantage of an opportunity which occurred to him of speaking to me, and said: 'You are Miss Tahourdin's governess and companion. If she wishes to see me again, I will arrange a meeting. I live near the village of Stanstead, in Warwickshire. The widow of an old

gamekeeper of mine occupies a cottage on the skirts of Coombe Wood. Her name is Goody Merlin. She will conceal her. If she really loves me at first sight as I love her I will see her there, and we can be married. I would propose openly to her, but I fear General Tahourdin wishes for an aristocratic match. I have several thousands a year, though no title. He will forgive us when we are married."

"Did he say all this?" asked Constantia, thrilling with wild joys.

"He did."

"Why have you not told me before?"

"Because I am your companion and friend, dear Constantia, and I did not know whether it would be for your good to do so."

"There would be no harm in my marrying him. It seems so odd, though, to think of marrying a man you have only seen once, though I believe in love at first sight."

"Certainly. Congenial natures are attracted to one another by a species of magnetism."

"Will you take me to Warwickshire? Shall we go to this Goody Merlin's?" asked Constantia, full of anxiety.

"If you desire it; thought I since I shall get into sad disgrace with General Tahourdin," answered Eglantine, throwing obstacles in the way on purpose.

"My father will not mind if he sees me happy. Oh! we must go. It will be nice. Fancy living in a cottage by a wood, and making love there! I never dreamt of anything half so deliciously romantic," said Constantia, clapping her hands with delight.

"I feel that I am not doing right in encouraging this romantic notion."

"Yes, you are. Papa will think anything right which conduces to my happiness ultimately; and, remember, Mr. Bourne is a gentleman with money. I have heard papa say as much; so that there is nothing objectionable about him personally. I dare say papa would let him pay his addresses to me here, but the bare idea of making love in a cottage by a wood drives me crazy. It is simply charming. One can look back all one's life on such a courtship."

"If you insist upon it——"

"I do—I do, Miss Langley. You must let me have my own way, and I will take care you do not get into any disgrace."

"Very well, I consent," answered Eglantine. "Say nothing to anybody, dear, and give me a few days to make arrangements, and find out how the trains go, and so on. You shall have your own way, but I do hope if any ill come of the step you are going to take you will not blame me."

"Never! It is all my own fault," rejoined Constantia. "Oh! you dear, good thing! I will love you always for this, and when I am my own mistress you will see how kind I will be to you."

Eglantine smiled, and became meditative. She was about to take a decided step, and could scarcely see where it would end. It was making a bold throw for her father's sake. She did not shrink from the difficulty and responsibility which it would entail upon her. If she could only get the general's daughter into her power, she felt that she would enable her father to dictate terms to him.

She was a brave girl and deserved success.

CHAPTER XVIII.

All are architects of fate

Working in these walls of time,

Some with massive deeds, and great,

Some with ornaments of rhyme. Long fellow.

In pursuance of her plan Eglantine made all arrangements. The girls determined to take only a travelling-bag to hold indispensable necessaries. A time-table showed them the train which would most conveniently take them, and, unfortunately for their enterprise, Constantia marked the station at which they were to get out for Stanstead with ink.

This afterwards fell into Mrs. Manners's hands, and proved a formidable weapon against them when they were pursued. Without that slight indiscretion, no one would have known whither they had gone.

Their flight was precipitated by an accident.

Now that they had made up their minds to fly from London, they talked more about their plans than anything else, and their studies were sadly neglected. There was one theme upon which both dwelt, and with similar emotion. That was the excellence, physical and mental, of Everard Bourne. Constantia would say:

"Do tell me what you think of him—dear, dear Everard!"

And Eglantine would dilate upon such a congenial subject for a long time.

"When shall we go?" said Constantia, one morning, throwing down a history of ancient Rome with a sigh of relief.

"To-morrow early," answered Eglantine; "when

we go for our usual walk in the park we will take a cab and drive straight to the station."

"I hope papa will not find us out and stop us. He is so hard and stern. I am afraid of him sometimes, though I know I am his pet and his darling."

"That you are indeed. He looks upon you as the apple of his eye."

"Yes, and I would rather stay here, and never see Everard again, and so break my heart, than do anything that would worry him very much about me; but this is so simple a matter, is it not? I go to see Everard, and when we are married papa can come and see us. Don't be offended, dear; but did not you run away from home? Mrs. Manners told me something about it."

"Mrs. Manners would oblige me extremely by minding her own business," said Eglantine.

"But did you? Do tell me," urged Constantia.

"Yes."

"Why did you?"

"Because I was unhappy, and they wanted me to marry a man I could not like, and I thought my father would be better without than with me for a short time."

"Do you love your father then as I love mine?" asked Constantia.

"Oh yes. I would do anything in the whole world for him," Eglantine answered, with enthusiasm.

"That's just how I feel."

"Look at this, dear," continued Eglantine, taking a locket from her bosom.

It was hung round her neck by a piece of velvet, and it contained a portrait of Captain Passingham. When the spring was pressed the inscription was seen. "To Eglantine Passingham, with her father's fond love." Underneath the miniature was written "Captain Passingham, R.N." The locket was of rich gold, inlaid with diamonds, and of considerable value.

"Is this your papa?" inquired Constantia.

"Yes. I would not part with it for the world. It is not a fine old fellow? I am so proud of him."

Constantia took the locket to the window so as to be able to examine it more closely. The room in which they studied was on the ground floor at the back of the house, and the window opened upon a small garden filled with shrubs and flowers.

The window happened to be open, and suddenly General Tahourdin emerged from behind a bush where he had been sitting smoking without the girl having any idea of his proximity. He had been too far off to overhear their conversation, nor is it to be presumed that he had any desire to do so.

But he was now near enough to see that Constantia held something in her hand.

"What have you there, my pet?" he exclaimed.

"Only a portrait of Miss Langley's father, papa," answered Constantia.

"May I look?" said the general, extending his hand.

"No, no!" cried Eglantine, rushing forward.

She tried to snatch the locket away from her pupil, but General Tahourdin was too quick for her and took it from his daughter's grasp.

"Ha, ha!" laughed he; "I can see how the case stands. The supposed father is evidently some handsome lover upon whom I will give my poor opinion."

Eglantine sank back in a chair and covered her face with her hands.

Here was a catastrophe. Not for worlds would she have had the general know that she was his enemy's daughter. It was one of those accidents merely the result of chance, which are so constantly occurring.

In moment the general's face clouded. He looked carefully at the portrait, and read the inscription; then, controlling himself as well as he could, he said:

"Constantia, my dear, oblige me by going into the garden for a few minutes. I wish to speak to Miss Langley, and will call you when I have finished."

Constantia, much surprised, did as she was requested; then, going close to Eglantine, his rage only more striking owing to his calmness and deadly pallor, he continued:

"I believe I am correct in supposing that this miniature is yours?"

Eglantine looked up at him in a frightened manner, but made no reply.

"Answer me!" he cried, in an impetuous voice.

"Yes," she rejoined, in a timid voice.

"Then you are Miss Passingham?"

"I am."

"Eglantine Passingham?"

"Yes."

"Why are you so tremulous? Have you an idea that this discovery will be displeasing to me?"

"Yes," answered Eglantine, again with hesitation, "because since I have been in this house I know you to be my father's enemy," she added, boldly, and thinking she would succeed with him better by being brave than seeming afraid of him.

"You know that, yet you stayed under my roof. Perhaps you knew it when you came—perhaps you are here with an object. A spy! Are you a spy?" exclaimed General Tahourdin, raising his voice.

"Indeed, I am not. My coming to you was the merest chance imaginable, and I did not know that you were my father's relentless enemy until I heard a conversation between you and Mr. Bourne. Since then I have been waiting for an opportunity to leave you."

"A very ingenious excuse," said the general, with a sarcastic smile. "You listen to a private conversation, and—But I have no patience with you. Arifil and designing, you have played the spy within my house and receiving my hospitality. Who knows whether you are not in correspondence with your father, or how far you have corrupted my daughter?"

"I do not quite know why you hate my father so bitterly, Mr. Tahourdin," said Eglantine. "But I have too high an opinion of you to think that you would do so without a cause. Still that is no reason why you should transfer your dislike to me. I have endeavoured to do my duty since I entered your household, and—"

"Stop, stop!" cried the general, whose face was perfectly livid with rage. "Did he never tell you the story? It seems that you, both of you, are aware that I am your enemy. Come, come, you must know something!"

"Are you the strange sailor he speaks about who swore to be avenged for some fancied injury?"

"I was that sailor. Fancied injury? Great powers!" he exclaimed as the veins on his forehead stood out like cords. "What do you say to this?"

In an instant, as it were, he threw off his coat and waistcoat, and, tearing his shirt open at the neck, forced it down to his waist and turned his back to Eglantine.

The flesh was scarred in a peculiar manner. It seemed as if pieces of skin and flesh had at some time or other been taken off with the utmost nicety, and the marks crossed one another like lattice work.

"Look at that!" cried the general, "that was your father's doing. He had me lashed like a dog, I, a gentleman, and the son of a gentleman! Forgive him! Never, never, never! When I see him utterly broken hearted and ruined beyond redemption, then I will mock him, and deride him, and tell him of the past! It is what I have lived for, this revenge."

Eglantine was shocked. She turned pale with horror and averted her eyes.

General Tahourdin put on his coat and waistcoat again, and paced the room uneasily. Suddenly he stopped opposite Eglantine and said:

"I hope you will pardon me if I have been rude or violent. This revenge is the dream of my life, and I feel that it drives me mad sometimes. It has made me a monomaniac. Certainly I am mad on that point, if mad means being wrapped up in one particular idea to the exclusion of all else. I feel a sense of impropriety at what I did just now, and I apologize, for if my passion makes me vehement I should be sorry to forget that I am a gentleman even in my intercourse with the daughter of my enemy."

"Oh, sir," said Eglantine, pathetically, "why will you not forego your revenge? My father was captain of the ship in which you sailed as a common sailor—I mean no offence—he only did his duty because you infringed some regulation. It was his place to punish those who disobeyed his lawful authority. Let the past be forgotten. Will you not? Oh, for Heaven's sake, listen to the voice of mercy!"

"No, no, I will not be spoken to like this," he replied. "You wish to make your father the injured party. I tell you there can be no peace between him and me, none whatever. I will drag him down, and when he is in the dust I will crush him utterly, as I would if I put my foot upon a writhing worm; and you, young lady, since this fortunate discovery—or unfortunate, whichever you like to call it—you must quit my house at once. Mrs. Manners will give you what money you are entitled to. I am sorry for this. I had begun to like you, yet you are Passingham's daughter, that reptile's child!"

Eglantine pleaded no longer. She saw that she could not make any impression upon the flinty heart of the old man. He was indeed a monomaniac. If attacked through his daughter, he would perhaps listen to reason, so she abandoned with the tact of a clever woman the position of supplication she had taken up, and in a dignified tone replied that she was quite ready to leave his house. She saw that it was impossible for her to remain there any longer under the circumstances.

"If you will kindly allow me an hour to pack up the few things I possess," she added, "I will go away, though I must take this opportunity of expressing my sense of gratitude for all your kindness to me."



[THE TRAP.]

As she said this she rose and quitted the apartment. Once the general moved as if he wished to stop her, but he changed his mind and resumed his seat. All the bitter memories of the past came trooping into his mind, and it was his evil hour.

Eglantine's bedroom window overlooked the little garden, and leaning out she made signs to Constantia, who, entering the house by a side door, joined her without passing the general.

"What is it, dear?" asked Constantia.

"We must go at once," answered Eglantine.

"At once? What has happened?"

"I cannot explain everything to you now, but this I may say—the result of my conversation with your father is that I leave this house in an hour. The fact is my papa and he were enemies. They knew one another, and if you wish to carry out our scheme you must meet me at the corner of the square in an hour's time. Do not let us be seen together. Wear a thick veil. My cab shall stop and pick you up. Now go, please, in case the general should ask for you."

Constantia did not a bit understand all this, but she was so full of determination to go through with her enterprise that she did not stay to ask any questions. Eglantine's arrangements were soon made, and, carrying her bag downstairs, she sought Mrs. Manners, to whom she returned the dresses she had lent her.

"I am sorry you are going, my dear. Why is it? The general has spoken a few words to me, but I know nothing definite. In what have you offended him?" said Mrs. Manners.

"The general and my father are enemies. It has all come out by accident. I cannot remain here under existing circumstances," answered Eglantine. "But my chief grief in leaving General Tahourdin's house will be the cessation of our amicable intercourse, and I hope you will think kindly of me sometimes, Mrs. Manners."

The housekeeper assured her that she would. She told her that she was a general favourite, and that her absence would make a gap in the family circle which nothing could fill up.

Finally Eglantine gave her her father's address, so that she could communicate with her if she wished to write at any time, announcing her intention of returning to the paternal roof.

She received the small amount of salary due to her, which was very acceptable, as it enabled her to pay the travelling expenses of Constantia and herself. The cab started.

General Tahourdin did not appear to wish her good-bye, and she was informed that Mrs. Tahourdin did

not wish to see her, and that Miss Tahourdin was out.

So she went away like one in disgrace. At the corner of the square a veiled figure was standing. Eglantine stopped the cab, the figure sprang forward, opened the door, and the next moment the two girls were side by side.

"Drive on," said Eglantine, and the cab dashed over the stones.

"Oh, you darling!" cried Constantia; "how well you have managed it all. I must say I was rather frightened until you came up. I thought I might be discovered, and taken back ignominiously; but this Maltese lace veil I have on is very thick, and disguises one effectually."

Eglantine put her arm round Constantia's waist and kissed her, and said:

"Oh, Constantia, if your father and mine were only friends!"

"What does it matter?" replied Constantia, coldly. "I am thinking much more about my Everard. Let them be enemies if they like; and do you know, dear, when I am married to Everard I will try and get you a nice man for a husband."

Eglantine smiled.

It seemed a great shame to deceive the poor girl, but after all she was exercising duplicity for her father's sake, and she would have acted the part of a hypocrite twenty times over to save him.

They were fortunate enough to catch a train, and quickly travelled to their destination.

Constantia had no luggage whatever. Eglantine had put a few necessaries for her in the bag she had with her, which did not hold much.

It was dark when they reached the station, and, to avoid recognition, they drew their veils down and walked quickly away.

"Now, dear, you must be strong and brave," said Eglantine. "We have some distance to walk. If we had a fly it would be so easy to trace us."

"Oh, I do not mind," answered Constantia. "Let me carry the bag when you are tired."

Eglantine fortunately was well acquainted with the roads, along which she had so often travelled, and ran no risk of losing herself. She left Stanstead on the left, and took a higher road to Coombe Wood.

Both were tired and exhausted with excitement and fatigue when they reached its outskirts, and knocked at the cottage door, which Goody Merlin opened with some hesitation.

"I admit no strangers at this time of night," she said. "Come again to-morrow, when the daylight will let me see your faces, girls."

"It is I, Goody—Eglantine Passingham. Do you

not know me? This lady is a friend of mine, and we have come to claim your hospitality, for which we are prepared to pay well," was the reply.

"Eh?" cried Goody Merlin. "I'm getting sand blind in my old age, though I thought I knew the voice. Come in, my dear; there's still a bit of fire on the hearth, for it's a cold night, and there's food in the cupboard, and spirits too for the matter of that, though they are in my private cellar, hid away from prying eyes. I'm old you know, and at my age, my dear, the blood wants warming."

By this time the girls were inside. Eglantine stirred up the fire. Goody Merlin shut the door and lighted another candle, while Constantia, pampered and reared in the lap of luxury, looked around her with ill-concealed disgust.

Her idea of romance had prepared her to rough it, but the change from a mansion in Cavendish Square to a hovel on the skirts of a wood was more striking than agreeable. She partook of some supper which the old woman provided, and was so tired that she gladly threw herself on a pallet in an inner room and went to sleep.

Eglantine and Goody Merlin continued to talk until it was growing late.

"At length the old woman said, in a low tone: 'I understand it all now, miss, and I will help you all I can. You must be careful though how you walk out, for Master Leon is about; he shot through this wood only a week ago, and set his dog on me because I told him bad luck was his fortune.'

"I will be careful," answered Eglantine. "What I want you to do, Goody, is to guard this girl I have brought with me. She must be a close prisoner while I return to my father's house."

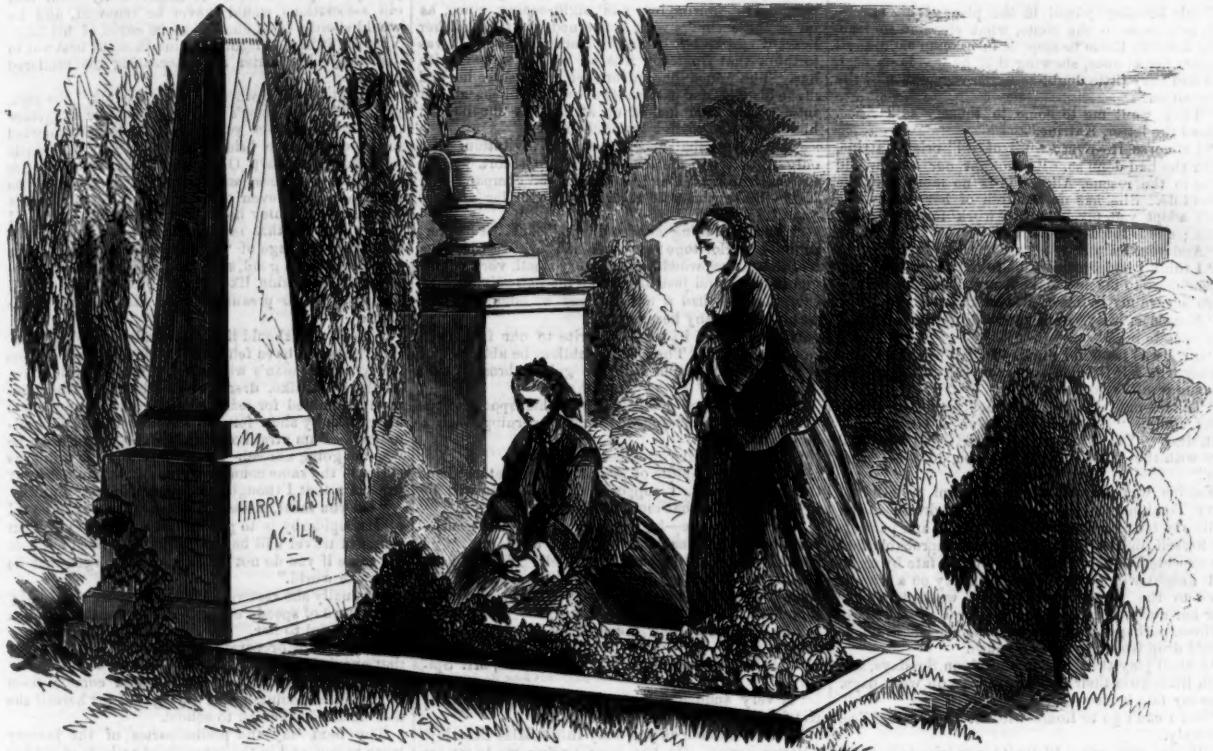
"I have but that inner room," rejoined Goody. "I could chain her to the wall, but her cries might betray me. Stay I there is the Gray Tower in the wood; the dungeon chamber is still complete. There she would be safe."

"I care not whether you take her," said Eglantine, "so long as you keep her safely. Do not hurt her, for I only hold her captive, as I have told you, as a means of making peace between her father and mine."

"Trust me," replied Goody Merlin. "I will think it out to-night, and it will be clearer to me in the morning; and the stars too will help me."

Eglantine wished her good night soon after this conversation, and fell asleep upon a roughly made bed, composed of materials taken from that on which the old woman herself slept. Tired nature stood in need of rest, and nothing more could be done until the morrow.

(To be continued.)



THROUGH DARKNESS TO DAWN.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Your very goodness and your company
Cymbeline.

"WHAT has kept you?" asked the banker of his porter, just after Doctor Bazzard went away, as Peter came up with the letter-bag.

"Have I been gone longer than I ought, sir? There was a dog-fight. Dogs always has an interest to me."

"Never mind about the dog-fight, Peter; give me the mail."

Peter gave him the bag, and as the banker retired to his private office with it, chuckled behind his back:

"I didn't see so much as the shadow of a dog; but it took me over half an hour to spell out that scrawl that Manchester doctor wrote to Jerry Tomkins," he mentally remarked. "If I couldn't beat him at penmanship, I'd never write to my best friend. He's a dreadful scrawler. So poor Mr. Treddle ain't the perfidious rascal I was obliged to consider him from his taking no notice of my letter. Got in such a hurry he fell and broke his arm! that's like him, anyhow. Golly! my heart's rose as light as an air balloon. I was so sorry for Miss Bright-eye. She shall have the felicity to read this document herself. I hope there's a letter or paper to be sent to the house, for I'd like to lose no time in setting a couple of roses on them pretty cheeks."

There was a letter for Mrs. Glaston, with half-a-dozen foreign post-marks on it, one of them from far-away Palestine, which Spiderby brought out.

"Take this to Mrs. Glaston, and say that I will do myself the pleasure of calling and hearing the news some time to-day."

"Yea, sir," said Peter, with the greatest alacrity.

Again it was Miss Bromley who met him at the door. But she had the excuse now that Rosa was dismissed, and no one but herself to answer the bell, unless Cook came up from the lower regions.

Katrine was pale and listless. Still she smiled on Peter in her old, sweet way, for she saw that the honest fellow would have done anything in his power to serve her; and she was not so rich in friends that she could afford to be ungrateful.

The porter's face beamed with such a triumphant expression that she felt sure that at last he had a letter for her. Her heart began to beat swiftly, only to sink more heavily when he held out the onemissive.

[THE VISIT TO HARRY'S GRAVE.]

"It is from Aunt and Uncle Bromley," she said, glancing over the envelope. "How glad my sister will be to hear from them at last!"

"Yes, and old Spider—I beg your pardon, Miss Bromley—Mr. Spiderby sends his compliments, and will call at his earliest convenience, to gratify his curiosity by asking what's in it. Leastwise, such was his message."

"Verbatim?" asked Katrine, laughing.

"Verb at him!" echoed Peter, looking puzzled; "yes, miss, I've no doubt of it, since you say so. Look here, Miss Bromley, you ain't in any particular hurry to take that letter up, are you?"

She paused, turning back on the stairs, and coming towards him.

Slowly, with an air of immense mystery, he drew from his vest pocket a letter, which he extended towards her.

"Oh!" cried Katrine, springing and seizing it. "Cruel Peter!" she added, the next moment; "I thought it was for me."

"So 'tis—so 'tis!"

"Am I Jerry Tomkins?"

"No, not exactly; but I be. It's all the same."

"Oh, is it?" asked the young lady, incredulously. "Bless your heart, I didn't mean you and me was a bit alike! You don't think I presume to insinuate any resemblance, Miss Bromley?"

Kate laughed merrily, despite her perplexity.

"I mean to say I've been engaged in anomalous correspondence, for your sake, Miss Bromley. Anomalous I'm Jerry Tomkins. But the letter's meant for you all the same. Just you read for yourself. There, there! I don't mean to stay while you read it. I'll clear out this minute. But I'll be round again by this time to-morrow; so, if you want anything of me by that time, you can make it known."

He closed the door between them with a cheerful bang, too delicate to remain while she read it, much as he would have liked to see the roses blush in her cheeks.

She drew out the brief note, written by a stranger at Thomas's dictation.

She grew pale and red by turns as her quick glance over-ran it—pale to think of the broken arm, rosy to feel the strong undercurrent of love which ran beneath the necessarily brief and cautious message.

"Work on her feelings, Peter! If she could see how thin I am! Tell her death alone shall prevent my making all things clear to her."

Katrine read this over and over. Her eyes swam in joyful tears. Then the pitiful image conjured up by the assertion of his thinness and illness came be-

fore her so vividly that she burst out crying. But joy was the predominant emotion. Thomas was true and loving. She had not been deceived in him. As soon as he could travel he was coming home to explain his silence by word of mouth. Oh, what a happy girl she was!

She flew upstairs to Alice, to whom she contrived to impart the news in a few incoherent words. Then she gave Alice her letter, and while she was reading the long twelve pages it contained Katrine powdered her own missive, calm enough by this time to wonder over the ambiguous expressions, hinting at so much that she dared not attempt to explain it to her own thoughts.

As we have said, she entertained no friendship for Spiderby; but she had no more suspicion of his real character than a babe might have had.

She was roused from her reveries by the sound of her sister's sobs; Alice was softly weeping over the earnest, affectionate condolences of her relatives. This was the second letter from them since her bereavement, and written in answer to one in which she had spoken of Harry's losses having driven him to suicide and incidentally of her own poverty.

"Katy tells us," her aunt went on to say, "that your health is much shattered by what you have endured. I can easily believe it, dear Alice, for you were never very strong, and the shock of these things must have been terrible beyond our poor conception of them. What I have to propose is, that you come to us. We do not desire to return to England for at least a year. We shall be travelling or staying for the most of that time in warm, dry climates, such as your health, it seems to us, demands. Every influence will be more favourable to you than it can possibly be where you are, surrounded by reminders of your desolation—change of air and scene, variety, our affectionate attentions, the novelty and interest of ancient countries, freedom from care. Katrine can either come with you or return to her school and remain there as a parlour-boarder until we arrive home. We leave you at liberty to decide that point for yourselves. In either case your uncle stands ready to meet all expenses, provided you are at all pinched for money. Invest what you have left of Harry's fortune, if anything remains, and come to us with just money enough to bring you. We will supply your future wants. We will meet you at Rome in April, if you say yes. Find some reliable escort—there are always plenty of our best people coming abroad in the spring—so that you can travel without annoyance. You see I do not forget how timid you are, dear Alice. Do make up your mind at once to accept our invitation. Your uncle and I are both positive

that it will be the best course you can pursue," etc., etc.

Uncle Bromley joined in the plea, giving minute instructions as to the route, what steamer to take, what hotel in Rome to stop at in case he should fail to meet her at once, showing that he was in earnest, and had very little doubt as to her acceptance of the proposition.

"They want me to come to them," said Alice. "Read the letter, Katrine."

"I endorse it—every word of it!" cried Katrine, when she had done so. "I thought our aunt would come to the rescue, Alice. It is no more than she should do. She has no children of her own. She shall adopt you, my pet. No work for my pretty sister; she is too dainty for that!"

"And you, Katy?"

"I think I had best go back to the school and give a year more to music—make it my specialty. I shall have to earn my living by it, you know."

"Nonsense, Katy. As if aunt will not be as liberal to you as to me."

"Oh, I was made for work. I shall never half live out my true self if I don't exert myself to the utmost in some positive vocation."

"Take it out in loving, Katrine," said Alice, with a sad smile. "I'm positive you've a vocation for that, dear. You'll make a superb wife, for you'll love with the same energy that you do everything else."

Katrine was glowingly conscious of a letter to Jerry Tomkins in the pocket of her dress. Even while she talked about teaching music, and perfecting herself in the science, it is not improbable that she expected to be rescued from such a fate by a gallant knight who should bear her away on a winged steed to the joyous paradise of a wedded home—bear her away, not just yet—not for a year, or two, or three, perhaps—but sometime, before the first load should drop from the rose of youth.

"I shall play the organ in church on Sundays, and teach little girls their dots and sharps on week days. I see my fate before me."

"But I can't go to Rome without you," said Alice, piteously.

"Oh, yes, you can. Write to our friends in town to be on the look-out for an escort. You can't imagine how I rejoice at this prospect of a change for you, my darling. It is precisely the right thing."

"You and I have been all to each other this weary winter," sobbed Alice.

"And we will be yet. Of course I shall go with you if we can find no better escort. But I think it simply judicious for me to seize this opportunity to perfect myself in the only science of which I know anything really substantial. I would like to place myself in a position to be independent for both our sakes, Alice, since no one can foresee what the morrow will bring forth. However, I don't absolutely refuse to accompany you. After we have once resolved what is best for you it will be easy to decide for me. I wish Mr. Treddle were here," she added, musingly. "I have more confidence in his advice than in Mr. Spiderby's. Oh, Alice, only think! to get away from him! That alone is inducement for you to go."

"It is, truly," said Mrs. Glaston, with a shiver.

"He sent word by his porter that he should call to hear the news from your friends. Of course he will oppose your going, but you need not be influenced by him."

She was mistaken. Spiderby did not oppose the project. He came in just as they were going down to luncheon, and they were obliged to invite him to share it with them. As her business adviser Mrs. Glaston would have consulted him with regard to the proposition contained in the letter she had received, but his eager curiosity did not wait for her to introduce the subject. They were scarcely seated at table when he inquired after her relatives, which was proper enough, seeing they were old friends of his own.

The reader may remember that it was Spiderby's acquaintance with Mr. Bromley which had been the means of introducing Harry Glaston to the house where he met his future wife.

"They are very well," said Mrs. Glaston. "They want me to come to them."

"Where? How?"

"To meet them at Rome, and remain with them during the remainder of their tour. They expect to be away about a year longer."

A bright flush of joy overspread the banker's sallow face.

"The idea is an inspiration," he said. "Nothing could be better."

"That is what I say," remarked Miss Bromley, surprised to find their visitor falling in so readily with the plan.

An expression more nearly resembling pleasure than any which had been seen there since her hus-

band's sudden taking away came over Alice's features. It was not the prospect of change—the excitement of journeying and sight-seeing, since, as far as these things were concerned, she felt that her heart would be left behind in Harry's grave. It was to think that Spiderby was so willing to part with her. The added burden on her spirit since he had made his rash and passionate avowal had been almost intolerable. She looked up at him, as she handed him his coffee, with a grateful smile.

"I believe I shall accept their kind invitation. The only trouble will be about a suitable escort. I am too timid to travel, except with good company, and Katry thinks she will return to school for another year."

"The best thing she could do," said the banker, in that superior tone that made haughty Miss Katrine glad that he regarded her as a very small, very young girl indeed; and just to rebuke his patronizing presumption she had a mind to say at once that she would accompany her sister.

"I suppose I had better write to our friends in London at once. They will doubtless be able to find some pleasant people who are going abroad," said Mrs. Glaston.

Spiderby stirred his coffee with his spoon to an extent quite exceeding the rule governing such a proceeding.

"How soon will you expect to start?"

"This is the middle of March. I should start about the first of April, I suppose. My relatives will be in Rome during that month."

"How fortunate—for me!" exclaimed the gentleman, as if the idea had just burst upon him. "I start for Paris about that time myself. In fact I have already made arrangements for that purpose. You know I should be only too happy to take charge of you, Mrs. Glaston."

The light and colour faded out of her delicate features.

"I did not know—This is new to us, Mr. Spiderby."

"A very sudden move on your part," remarked Katrine, sarcastically.

"Not so sudden as you may think, Miss Bromley. Ask my doctor. He has been urging me to go for some time. I have spoken of such a trip to dozens of my friends. In fact, my physician said so much about a change of some kind becoming imperative that I have quite decided on a flying visit to the Continent, and have been arranging my business with a view to it."

The ladies could not deny that he had been looking wretchedly worn of late. Katrine had no reply to make. She was vexed beyond words that such a coincidence should occur, but she could not accuse their visitor of taking any blameable advantage in order to bring it about. He saw their discomposure and felt that it would be safe to take the humble and injured part.

"However, you are not at all obliged to go with me, Alice," he said. "I know that I have made myself disagreeable to you. It was to leave you more free and happy as well as in the hope of regaining my own failing spirits that I purposed leaving this country for a few months. Believe me, I don't wish to add to your cares. I would do anything to make you happier. If my company will be a constraint upon you during the short time which it will require to restore you to your uncle's protection, I will look out for some more welcome escort, and will take care that we do not travel together, even if I have to delay my journey until you have gone."

"Oh, Mr. Spiderby!" cried Alice, in faint deprecation.

"It shall all be just as you would have it," he continued, gently. "I will, at all events, see that you have the companionship of lady-friends. And if we do make up a party, I, at least, will be but an insignificant unit; promising to annoy you just so much as is necessary for your own comfort, and no more. I suppose I might see to your baggage, or render you any service of the kind that might lay in my power, without burdening you too much with my society?"

And he laughed good-naturedly.

He did not press the matter any farther at that time. Immediately after luncheon he went away.

"Katy, the charm of the prospect is all destroyed," sighed Mrs. Glaston, after he had gone, sinking wearily into her favourite chair in the sitting-room.

She was pale and depressed. Katrine felt angry and vexed beyond expression to think that the first vivacious fit of life and colour which her darling had displayed should be thus obliterated. Yet she could not deny that the chance for Mrs. Glaston was a good one. That Spiderby would be most attentive to all her wants, watchful of her comfort, in every way an excellent and gentlemanly escort, she knew. As to that mad fancy of his, why Alice would be in his company but a very short time, then, necessarily,

their paths must part. She would be taken completely away from him. It might easily occur that old associations would never be renewed, and he would stand a good chance to be cured of his folly. Viewing it in this light, Katrine thought best not to discourage her sister from accepting the proffered escort.

"Don't be too cowardly, Alice, darling," she said, gaily. "Mr. Spiderby's society may not be altogether pleasant to you, but you have only to look forward to the end of the brief journey. Once with uncle and your paths part. Oh, it is a thousand times better than staying here and having him come as he does to vex and even threaten you. When you are with Uncle Bromley he will not dare annoy you. I have yet to see that man so chivalrous that he will not take advantage of an unprotected female." But just you place a good, stout, worldly, well-to-do protector by your side, like Uncle Bromley, and you'll see if any one presume to be disagreeably audacious."

"Yes, yes, I should like to be under uncle's protection, Katy. I have felt so frightened and so helpless lately. That man's will is frightful. Do you know, much as I dislike, dread, abhor the idea, I have secretly trembled for fear that he would compel me to marry him by sheer force of his indomitable determination! I am afraid of him, Katrine. I do wish he was not going abroad. I don't like to think of him as being in the same country even. It was to get away from him that I thought favourably of going."

"Go you must, Alice. The quickest way to be rid of Mr. Spiderby is to get to Uncle Bromley. Your routes of travel will be different. You need not hear his name if you do not wish, and can forget that he is in the world."

Gradually she restored Alice's faltering courage by the picture of speedy emancipation from the domination hateful to her.

The time for preparation arrived. Entering wrote that evening an answer in Alice's name to the Bromleys, promising that her sister would come to them at the time appointed, and saying that for herself she had decided to return to school.

The next day the preliminaries of the journey were begun, and in the consequent activity of getting ready Alice speedily grew more cheerful.

As for Katrine, she was actively gay. Naturally of a joyous temperament, it was only her keen sympathy with her sister's grief which had so long held her in bondage. Now, in the belief that Alice was going to a protection far more satisfactory than her own, a great weight of care was lifted from her young shoulders.

While sweetly, sweetly in her heart caroled the bird of love. That one message from Thomas was all she needed to fully restore her faith in him. She could wait his coming now with patience—only so that he came before Alice and herself left Burnley. For his speedy arrival she was presently made to look by the reception of another note to Jerry Tomkins, stating that in a few days he should be sufficiently recovered to travel.

CHAPTER XXVII.

If consequences do but approve my dream
My boat sails freely both with wind and stream.

Othello.

THAT Mrs. Glaston should ignore his existence was the last thing intended by Spiderby. He saw in this sudden change of scene such a glorious vista of possibilities that all the old audacity of his hopes revived. He was like a man who has laid his head on the block and has received a respite before the axe fell.

His friends said that the mere contemplation of his foreign tour had cured him so completely that there was no need to go abroad. He had indeed wonderfully brightened up. The hunted, haunted look had vanished.

Words cannot describe how he watched and waited for the day upon which it had been arranged that Mrs. Glaston should commence her journey. The whole longing of his heart went out to the time when he should stand by the side of Alice far away from the crushing associations which had well nigh borne him down.

Not until then did he dare consider himself safe. Yet such is the uncrushable quality of hope that he certainly expected that happy hour would arrive for him.

To get away from Peter Cooper, from Treddle, from Effie Cooper, from that vault in the cellar, from the sight of that river flowing under his window—why, this alone was heaven. To shake off the clogging spell of memory, the hideous nightmare of fear, was rapture. But to accomplish all this, and also secure the sweet companionship of Alice Glaston, was ecstasy.

He said to his friends, and to Mrs. Glaston, that he expected to be absent only about a few months.

While the truth was that his affairs were arranged so that he could remain away a lifetime if it suited him. But of this, he gave no hint. Secretly he intended to stay abroad as long as Mrs. Glaston, and to bring her home his wife, provided they came home at all. If anything occurred during the time he was abroad to alarm him, he should continue to stay away. If not, if his crime appeared to be unguessed by any, he might return and begin life afresh in some new locality—probably London. To Burnley he never meant to return for a residence.

Such was his egotism, or, at least, his fierce, unflattering purpose, that he felt as assured of winning Alice sooner or later as if she had already promised him. The opportunities he should have would be much more favourable than here in this dull town, under the eyes of critical acquaintances and surrounded by associations of that dead man.

Saying not a word of such a purpose, it was his resolve to make one of the Bromley party, go whither it might. Alice's uncle was an old business friend of his, and would doubtless welcome the addition to his company with pleasure. Alice would be shy as a startled fawn at first; but he should have long, sunny months to woo her in, and time itself would come to his aid.

He foresaw days of delicious pleasure in store for him. How well he could afford to wait until Alice's term of mourning had fully expired—wait, without even breathing one word of love in spoken language to her—since he was to have her society, and could make all the charms of earth, sea, and sky, speak for him.

They would float together at the witching twilight hours over the lagunes of Venice; they would stand together beneath the solemn arches of vast cathedrals; they would walk together at sunset amid the ruins of Rome and over her magnificent Campagna; together they would listen to the most superb music in Milan's opera-house, whose passionate utterances should interpret what he fain would say. Yes, under these circumstances of pleasant wanderings under summer skies he could well refrain even from touching her cool, soft hand, or saying one rash word to disturb her, so be it that he might look in her blue eyes, or feel some stray ringlet of her glittering hair blown against his breast by Italian winds. At last the day would come when she would yield to his silent, intense will.

His blood danced in his heart at the dream of these things to be. But he kept a discreet reserve respecting them. To Mrs. Glaston he had again become only the gentlest, most considerate of friends and advisers. He did just what was needed and no more. Her dread of the journey in his company sensibly decreased after he had secured for her the additional protection of a gentleman and his wife, slightly known to both, of the highest respectability and accomplished travellers.

It was not thought strange in Burnley that such a friend of the family as Spiderby should chaperone Mrs. Glaston on the occasion of her going to join her relatives, especially as it was understood that there would be some ladies in the party. It was considered fortunate for her that so good an opportunity had occurred; her friends were all certain that nothing could be so beneficial to her as the proposed extended tour which she was to make with her uncle. She could not but be influenced by the congratulations she received. Yet the nearer the time approached at which she was to quit Burnley the closer her heart clung to the place. To go away was to desert her husband's grave.

One bright afternoon she stood long in her old attitude at that window of her room which overlooked the river. Light fleeces of gleaming clouds were blown through the clear azure. She saw them reflected from the blue ether above to the water below.

After a long reverie she turned to Katrine, who was watching her with some solicitude.

"The frost must be all out of the ground, Katy. It is time Harry's grave-stone was set. I can't go until that is done."

"Yes, darling, it was set yesterday. Mr. Spiderby and I attended to it. Would you like to drive out this afternoon and see it?"

"Oh, yes. So that was what took you out yesterday. How thoughtful you are of everything, my dear sister. This is a lovely spring day. Yes, let us keep it by spending a part of it by Harry's grave. I will get on my wraps in one moment. In a very, very few days I shall be speeding far away from that only spot on earth I really care for."

"Get ready as soon as you please, darling. I hear the carriage coming up to the door now. I ordered it from the livery-stable this morning, seeing that the day would be suitable for you to venture out."

In a few moments they descended to the waiting carriage. Alice, deeply veiled, shrinking from the garish out-door light, saw nothing as the door was

held open for her to enter the vehicle. She stepped quickly in and shrank into a corner, totally absorbed by the nature of the melancholy visit she had undertaken.

But Katrine, who always had her eyes about her, was both surprised and disconcerted to discover in the driver the strange man who had so often haunted that vicinity, endeavouring, it would appear, to pry into the private affairs of the household. He did not appear to seek recognition, but rather to avoid it.

After an instant's swift reflection, she decided to appear as if she were unconscious of his identity with the intruder who had once been driven from the house, and also got into the carriage after giving him the order to drive to the cemetery.

"You know where it is?" she asked.

"I, of all persons, ought to be familiar with it," he answered, touching his hat, coachman fashion.

His answer, so poutful, and given in language so unbefitting his station, still farther disconcerted her. She was positively agitated as she took her seat by her sister; but she had no thoughts of disquieting Alice by mentioning the coincidence to her.

They drove out of town along the pleasant road leading to the cemetery. When they entered its precincts the place seemed so isolated and deserted that Katrine felt by no means easy in the company of that strange driver. That the livery-stable keeper had seen fit to employ him was no guarantee that he would not repeat the impertinences of which he had once been guilty. However, it was broad daylight, and she was a brave girl, so she made as light of her fears as possible.

It seemed that they were indeed without foundation, since, no sooner did the ladies alight at a few paces from Mr. Glaston's grave, than he drove on some little distance to await their orders, as if deliberately desirous not to intrude upon the mourners by his presence.

The scene at the grave was so painful that it required the exercise of all Katrine's fortitude not to give way under its influence.

Mrs. Glaston, owing to the inclement winter and her delicate health, had been to the cemetery, but once or twice before this, and each time it had been almost like that first parting from the coffin containing the remains upon which she had not been allowed to look. Now, as she sank upon her knees beside it, pressing her white face into the sod or raising it to Heaven with looks of agony, she betrayed to her sister that her sorrow was not one pang less intense than on the day of her loss.

"It will kill her. I am sorry that I brought her here," thought Katrine, scarcely knowing how to draw the mourner away from the spot, yet fearful both of the gathering dampness of the air and of the effect of such uncontrolled emotion.

In her perturbation she looked towards the carriage, intending to make a sign to the driver to come up. He was not on the box; he had tied his horses and disappeared, probably on a stroll about the grounds.

Just then Peter Cooper came in sight. Not knowing that the ladies were visiting the cemetery, the sunny afternoon, still bright after the hour for closing the bank, had tempted him to go up and take a look at the new grave-stone.

When he perceived them he turned off to another portion of the enclosure to wait until they had retired. Here he encountered the driver of the vehicle.

Hidden by a group of shrubs, sitting on a granite slab, his face buried in his hands, he beheld that unknown vagabond whom Spiderby had insisted upon naming John Glaston.

At the sound of a footstep crackling on the dry turf he looked up.

A face so wild, so colourless, so full of some terrible passion, yet so unreadable, Peter had never before seen.

"Oh, it is you, Peter, is it?" said the man.

"Yes, it's me, unless I'm mistaken," responded the porter, coming to a full stop, and diving his hands into his pockets as if for an oration. He pitied the man before him while he burned with curiosity to know something about him. "I may have got changed in my cradle, you know, and not be myself at all. Like yourself now—old Spider declares that you are John Glaston, who was washed off a vessel and drowned. Come now, tell a fellow—he you?"

"He says that, does he?"

"I reckon he does. He can't account in no other way for your looking so much like his particular bosom friend, who he—who dumped himself in the river last year. Heard of that, I suppose?"

"Yes, I've heard of it."

"He thinks you're a brother of his, come sneaking round to find out how much money was lost. He says you needn't take the trouble—there ain't a shilling. Even the pretty widow lives on his bounty."

"Ha!"

"That's so. The very vittles she puts in her mouth. He'll get his pay back, according to his calculation, when she becomes Mrs. Spiderby. Sweet, now, isn't it?"

There was immense sarcasm in the tone in which Peter put this question.

"Why?" asked his companion, looking sharply into his eyes.

"If you know what I know you wouldn't ask."

"Does she encourage him?"

"About as much as a robin encourages a cat. She may twitter and squeal at first, but she'll drop dead alive into his jaws after he's mesmerized her."

The stranger's face was no longer colourless, for it had a tinge of green. It might have been thrown there by the gloomy shrubs. He arose and peered through their branches at the slender figure in black, kneeling before the grave.

"Is it a farce she is engaged in, then?" he asked, pointing with mocking finger, at the woman in her anguish.

Peter did not understand. He rather suspected the stranger of insanity. He had thought so before, now he was quite sure of it. But presently the other resumed a more natural voice and expression.

"They are not ready to quit that mummery just yet," he said. "I would take it as a favour if you would tell me some of the particulars of Henry Glaston's death, how his wife took it, etc. I am a near relative of the family. I have a right to ask these questions, since I am sincerely interested in them."

"Tell me who you be first, stranger."

"I am John Glaston. I was lost overboard—all my friends suppose me dead—but I escaped death by one of those miracles which are almost incredible when told. I am shipwrecked, not only in body but in fortune, and everything else. Hence I do not care just yet to declare myself. If I had found Harry alive it might have been different. But go on, please, and tell me about him. We have but five or ten minutes, so tell me only what you think will most interest me."

Peter obeyed, giving a brief history of the suicide—the town's amazement—the theory—the letter written by the suicide to his wife—Mrs. Glaston's overwhelming grief—the finding of the body, and its burial long weeks after. Peter related it as any outsider might have done, giving no hint of that darker history known to himself. There would be time enough for that should he find this John Glaston a man to be trusted.

Occasionally the other asked a question, but for the most part listened in silence.

"How comes it that Mrs. Glaston is going to Rome in Mr. Spiderby's company?" he asked, at the conclusion.

"Her uncle sent for her, and Spiderby's just taken the liberty o' goin' too. I expect he feels as if another country would agree with him better than this."

"What do you mean?" asked the other, quickly.

"I don't mean nothing. Only he's dead in love with the widdow, and must go taggin' after, I suppose. They'll come back man and wife, sure's my name's Peter."

"Peter, will you drive them home, and take the carriage safely to the stable? I don't feel like meeting Mrs. Glaston again. She might see a resemblance to Harry. I'd like to stay here by my brother's grave a little while," he said, half-mockingly.

Peter had no objection to taking the ladies home. He slowly approached them, taking off his hat as he caught sight of Mrs. Glaston on her knees.

"That driver's kind of ill," he said. "He's given me the privilege of driving you back to town. I'm ready when you be."

"I'm glad of the exchange," said Katrine, speaking low not to attract her sister's attention. "I'm still a little afraid of that man."

"Katy, here are some violets. I did not think they would be up. I wonder if they blossom earlier on graves."

Mrs. Glaston gathered three or four small blossoms from the turf and turned away in answer to Katrine's admonition that it was growing late.

"I shall have these with me wherever I go!" she moaned.

Without another word or sigh she allowed herself to be taken away from Harry's grave.

As soon as the carriage disappeared upon the highway the stranger came forward, and scrutinized, with a curious, jeering look, the slender obelisk, marked with Harry Glaston's name and age.

"It is really touching," he muttered.

"They start on the third of April, and this is the twenty-ninth of March," he resumed, after a long reverie. "I must speak now, or for ever after hold my peace. At least I will go and see this Spiderby. It will be a real pleasure to force him to talk with me, face to face."

He went lingeringly along the gravel paths; the

cemetery was soon left behind, and it was growing dark as he strolled back into the town.

Spiderby was walking backward and forward along the piazza of the hotel as the stranger went slowly by. The gas was lighted and shone gaily on the banker's animated face, his fine clothing, his rich chain and seal glimmering over his vest. He was the picture of a flourishing man of the world. The vagrant regarded him with hungry eyes.

Spiderby was whispering to himself the very words which this man had said in the graveyard a little while before:

"We start on the third of April, and this is the twenty-ninth of March."

It was his incessant habit to count the days and hours. Every morning as he opened his eyes his first thought was, "One day nearer!" He would have added, "Thank Heaven!" but he dared not. He had no reason to feel that Heaven was helping him in this matter.

He had taken things into his own hands, and only so that he escaped discovery and somehow got Alice Glaston for his wife he reckoned not what dark spirits were on his side.

How he longed to be away with Alice only himself knew. With every passing hour he grew more assured.

Tredille had not returned; Peter was silent; the nameless stranger—hump! here was the fellow on the piazza staring at him.

The eye of the stranger held his as it had done so many times before; he came to a stop in his promenade; almost against him will he spoke:

"Do you want anything of me?"

"I do. I want to go up to your room and talk with you."

"I'm not in the habit of taking persons who are unknown to me to my room. What do you want?"

"I want to ask you a few questions. I'm quite willing to ask them here, if you prefer this publicity."

His tone was cool and assured.

The banker, glancing round, saw that several idlers had paused in expectation of some kind of "a row."

"I don't want to talk to you here," he answered, biting his lips. "Come up then."

He turned into the hotel, went upstairs and along the passage, followed by the stranger close at his heels. When he entered his room it was quite dark, and for one moment he was alone in the silence and the darkness with this mysterious intruder.

His hand quivered so that he tried several matches before he succeeded in lighting the gas. He turned it on to the fullest, then confronted him whom he felt instinctively to be his enemy.

Spiderby used to be a cool man and a bold one. This trembling of his nerves, this starting at shadows and shrinking from his fellows, had come to him during the past winter and increased upon him.

To-night he had to steady himself with the thought that safety was only five days off, and this man, however near a relative of Henry Glaston's, was a stranger to him, to his past, to his future, to his motives, to his expectations, before he could fairly face him. When he did turn to him, haughty and arrogant, it was with the crushing air of the great man to the little.

The other was not at all disconcerted by this hauteur. There was some indefinable expression in his clear, steady eyes which made it very hard for the banker to maintain his own look.

"You say you wish to talk with me. Begin, if you please. I have an engagement at half-past seven—it is now seven," looking at his watch.

"With Mrs. Glaston?"

"It is impertinent of you to make the inquiry; but I have no objections to stating that it is with Mrs. Glaston—our business. She will start for Italy soon, and as her business agent and friend I have a good deal to do for her just now."

"I am impudent, I know, Mr. Spiderby. A natural interest in my brother's wife must excuse that and several other inquiries."

"Hem!" ejaculated the banker, changing colour; "then my surmises are correct. You are John Glaston?"

"I am Harry's brother."

"Why didn't you reveal yourself when you first came? I see no reason for this secrecy. Mrs. Glaston would have been glad to welcome you—provided there is nothing bad or criminal about you," added the banker, half suspiciously, half patronizingly.

An inscrutable smile hovered in the stranger's eyes and disappeared.

"There is something bad and criminal about me—very close to me, indeed. Why should I trouble so fair a lady with the presence of a moneyless, nameless, homeless vagabond?"

"We all thought you dead," observed Spiderby.

embarrassed by the first part of the other's remark. It seemed to mean something and not to mean it.

"The dead sometimes come to life," was the response.

Why did Spiderby start and shiver, and send a wild and wandering glance about the room, as if invisible ghosts were becoming palpable to him?

It was the man's voice which had given him such a sensation. As we sometimes hear a familiar tone or see a familiar look in a stranger which reminds us of a friend, his voice as he uttered these few words was strangely like his brother Harry's.

The sight of Harry Glaston, uprising from the grave to reproach him, would hardly have affected Spiderby more deeply.

Both had been standing—he now sank into a chair, motioning his visitor to do the same.

"I would not like to sit in your presence. What I wish to ask you is—how much property did Henry leave his wife?"

"None—not a shilling."

The banker recovered himself at this prosaic question. His suspicion that the vagabond was on a sly hunt for money revived; it gave him real satisfaction to answer him promptly in a manner to destroy his hopes, if he still entertained any. "He was speculating in gold all last summer. He was unfortunate, and became involved so deeply that he could not retrieve himself. He did not do altogether right, either."

"It is bad when men fail to do altogether right," was the reply, again in that mocking tone.

"I shall not expose the weaknesses and faults of the dead," continued the banker, with an air of righteous self-denial. "I suffered some losses myself through my partner's rashness. Suffice it to say that at the settling up of his estate nothing was left. His widow is actually at this moment subsisting upon my—charity—though I don't call it that, since I entertain for her the warmest friendship."

"You are a fearful hypocrite," said the man, looking him full in the eyes. "I'm sorry about the money, of course, but what I chiefly want to know, since I have no hopes of getting any of that, is whether you expect to marry this impoverished widow of my brother's? If you can speak the truth, speak it now!"

"You use strange language, sir. Do you expect me to put up with—"

"Yes; I expect you to put up with anything I choose to say. Now, tell me the naked truth, before Heaven—have you any reason to suppose that Mrs. Glaston cares for you?"

"You are greatly in earnest about it," sneered Spiderby. "If you knew her, I should half suspect that you were in love with her."

"I am," answered the other, a spasm of pain passing over his features. "I should be willing to wrestle again with life for the prizes of fortune and love, for the sake of being her protector and provider."

"Oh, thank you, she is both protected and provided for. I have claimed that as my privilege too long to resign it to another—especially to such a woe-begone knight-errant as yourself."

"I know that I am poor and unfashionably dressed. All I want now is the fact. I want to know if the lady loves you."

There was a hollow sound of pleading and mighty passion under the calm tone in which he spoke; as sometimes under the ice of a great lake you can hear the water moaning and rushing beneath its crystal fettters.

The banker was faintly conscious of it; indeed, like Peter, he received an impression that this wild, haggard, unreasonable fellow was partially insane.

But the image conjured up by the question "Does the lady love you?" was so much more interesting than any subtle undertone of pain and longing in the man's speech that Spiderby was quite absorbed by that.

"Does she love me?" repeated Spiderby, stealing a side glance at himself as he stood before the pier glass of his luxuriously furnished room, and smiling at the handsome, complacent figure and face he saw reflected there. "It is early in the day for her to have confessed as much; but

"There are looks, and tones, which dart

A sudden sunshine through the heart, as Moore says, if you've ever read him, and bring conviction too. But I have no right to betray a lady's heart, so I will not answer you."

It would be impossible to describe the whole air of conceit and self-satisfaction which beamed from him as he made this reply; but it quickly faded as his visitor advanced upon him with so threatening an air as to cause him to assume an attitude of defence.

"Has she said or acted as if she would ever marry you?" hissed this unaccountable Glaston, his face white, his eyes blazing with fury.

"She has," affirmed Spiderby, shrinking behind a chair, the back of which he clenched to have it ready to parry an attack. "That lady will some day be my wife. I love her, and if she does not already return my love, the time is not far away when she will be completely mine. There; I swear it! I loved her before Harry Glaston stepped in with his younger face and his slender figure to catch her ready fancy. No woman can long resist the fixed passion of a man of my age. She will be better worth winning, when she becomes my wife, than when she imagined herself in love with that fair-faced boy. The woman will adore me as the child fancied him. Already she is two-thirds won."

He was speaking now more to himself than his visitor. His voice trembled with fond, eager anticipation.

John Glaston, sinking from his furious attitude into one of profound melancholy, drooped his head, and went staggering from the room.

"I can't make head or tail of it," murmured Spiderby, looking his door to keep the intruder from returning. "I don't think the man is in his right mind. Dear me, I'm growing so agitated, all these things unsettle me. In five days—in five days—all this will be ended."

He took a few turns through the room to restore his equanimity, then studied himself in the mirror, gave an extra brush to his hair, took from a glass on the table a bouquet of rosebuds and pansies, and set forth to call on Mrs. Glaston.

"Five days more! only five days more!" he kept whispering to himself all the way to the house.

And all the way to the house, this time unobserved even by himself, he was dogged by the stranger; and when the door opened admitting him to that charming home and the presence of those beautiful women, the homeless one lurked in the shadows across the way, watching, with eager, hungry eyes, phantoms of the figures within, which moved across the curtains now and then like the meagre show of a magic-lantern.

He was still there when Spiderby, at ten o'clock, came down the steps.

(To be continued.)

MIDSHIPMEN AND SHIP APPRENTICES.—The Registrar-General of Seamen has found it necessary to issue a notice cautioning parents and guardians requiring berths for boys as midshipmen or apprentices on board British merchant ships against applying to unauthorized persons, who, with the object of illegally obtaining money by way of premium or outfit, profess to procure engagements on board ships, rendering themselves liable to be prosecuted under the Merchant Shipping Act. The only persons authorized to engage or supply mates, seamen, and apprentices are the following:—The owner, the master, or the mate of the ship, or some person who is the bona-fide servant and in the constant employ of the owner or the superintendent of a Government mercantile marine office (to be found at the several ports of the kingdom) or an agent licensed by the Board of Trade. These superintendents will afford every facility to persons desirous of obtaining berths on board British merchant ships. The fee payable to the superintendent of a mercantile marine office for his assistance in completing an apprenticeship indenture in no case exceeds 5s., and for engaging or supplying a mate, seaman, midshipman, or any other person for service on board ship the fee does not exceed 2s. Persons who have been imposed upon are requested to address their complaints to the Registrar-General of Seamen, 6, Adelaide Place, London Bridge.

CYCLOPEAN REMAINS NEAR KILLYBEGS.—In a beautiful mountain valley near Killybegs, looking out over Fintra Bay, some extraordinary remains of Cyclopean work exist. These were visited and examined some time since by Mr. Dugan, local secretary of the Royal Archaeological Society, and the Rev. Mr. Stevens, P.P., a gentleman who has given much attention to antiquarian subjects. The buildings consist of an irregularly oval-shaped chamber, and a partially closed connecting passage, the sides and roof of which are formed of huge slabs of stone; those composing the roof are almost level with the surface of the hill in which the chambers are excavated. The floor, which is at present covered with rubbish, loose stones, and brambles, must have been at least six feet deep. The long diameter of the chamber and the passage have a direction due east and west. The western entrance opens right out on the side of the mound or hill, and is formed of two large upright stones, about three feet apart, with a present height above ground of two and a half feet. On these rests an enormous block, somewhat irregular in shape, and so supported by a mere knife-edge on the south jamb-stone that it may easily be shaken or vibrated. The dimensions of this stone

are eight feet long, five feet ten inches wide; and two feet ten inches in mean depth; the other stones forming the sides and roof are also of great size. Several drawings, plans, and measurements of these most interesting and mysterious remains were made by Mr. Durgan, and they will probably form the subject of a communication to the Natural History and Philosophical Society of Derry at its next meeting. An examination of the ground in the immediate vicinity disclosed traces of other buildings. The remains are undoubtedly from a most remote date, and are probably those of some Firbolg fortress.

LIFE'S SHADOWS.

CHAPTER XXI.

CAPTAIN HOLM was not far wrong in believing that he had broken up the peace of the hitherto happy family at Thornhurst. The beautiful marchioness was secretly anxious, unrestful, and unhappy, a prey to the keenest fears and apprehensions; and the seeds of distrust had been sown in the mind of the marquis, which were destined to bring forth a plentiful harvest of bitterness, jealousy, and anguish.

The trust of Lord Thornhurst in his lovely wife had been as absolute as his love for her was passionate and profound, until the moment when, having been told by her maid that she slept, he turned from the door to behold her upon the stairs in drabbed dress and damp garments, her face ghastly, wild, and woeful, looking out at him from the folds of her wet shawl.

The sight of her thus, and there, was a shock to him. In his amazement he had suffered her to pass him and enter her chamber. In a sort of bewilderment he had descended the stairs, to be met by a housemaid with a message that the gardener desired to see him in his private room, as already stated.

The marquis, with a strange shadow on his noble, Saxon brow, proceeded thither immediately.

Lord Thornhurst's study was a room on the ground floor of one of the towers. It had a garden door, and was furnished simply with a Turkish carpet, swinging chairs, book-cases well filled with works of reference, and a handsome writing-desk. In this room the marquis received his tenants; here complaints were made to him and favours demanded; and here too he held frequent conferences with his land agent, his gardeners, and others in his employ.

There was no fire in the study upon this evening, and the room was chilly. A single wax candle served to make the shadows in the corners more apparent.

As the marquis came in, the gardener, who had witnessed the egress of Holm from the conservatory, arose, and, flinging his hat awkwardly, bowed respectfully.

"Well, what is it, Watts?" said Lord Thornhurst, crossing the room and leaning against the low marble mantelpiece. "Do you want leave of absence, or is something wrong at the lodge?"

"None of them, my lord," answered the man, looking troubled. "But something has happened which I think as you should know, my lord. I don't rightly know how to get at the telling, my lord, for fear of giving offence, and it's not for the likes of me to speak a word as may hint against them as is set over me. And I daresay it may be all right, my lord, only it's my duty to tell you—"

"What is the meaning of this long preamble?" interrupted Lord Thornhurst, half impatiently, yet not unkindly. "Come to the point, Watts. Have I been robbed by any of the gardeners? Is there anything wrong going on?"

"Your lordship can decide that better than I can," replied the gardener, with an effort. "I'll come to the point, my lord. This evening, after trimming the plants in the conservatory, I carried out a big load of twigs, branches, and dead leaves, and loaded them on to a barrow, and wheeled 'em away as usual to the yard. I left the conservatory door open. As I comes back, a long time afterwards, I sees the door is still open. I comes up the steps, and out dashes a man. I tries to grapple with him, but he dashes over the side of the steps and runs down the lawn into the dark, and I loses sight of him. I thinks it's my duty to tell your lordship, and here I am, my lord!"

The gardener wiped his perspiring forehead. He found it more difficult to address the marquis with his simple story than to engage in the hardest manual labour.

"A man sprang out of the conservatory!" exclaimed Lord Thornhurst, quickly. "Have you searched the place to see that no accomplices were hidden in the dark alleys?"

"Yes, my lord, but there warn't no 'complises.'"

"At what hour did you see the man?"

"About half-past six o'clock, my lord. 'Twere on the stroke of the dinner-bell."

Lord Thornhurst looked graver.

"Had the fellow been a little earlier," he thought, "Ignatia must have seen him. The appearance of a burglar might well have accounted for her agitation and alarm."

After few moments' thought he demanded:

"How did he look—this burglar? Give me a complete description of him, as nearly as you can, Watts, and I will put the household on its guard."

"He warn't no burglar, my lord," answered the gardener; "at least, no ordinary burglar. He was tall, and a little stoutish, and had a pale, bloated sort o' face, and eyes like lightning. He wore a long, loose Spanish cloak, and a low hat drawn down over his eyes. He was a gentleman, my lord—"

"You mean he looked like a gentleman!" interposed Lord Thornhurst. "He couldn't be a gentleman, for gentlemen don't enter the houses of strangers by stealth. He was probably a burglar of a superior sort."

Watts shook his head obstinately.

"He was a gentleman born and bred, I dare swear, my lord," he asserted, doggedly. "He was a little down in the world, I take it, but he was a gentleman, with the manners and breeding which no burglar could imitate."

Lord Thornhurst looked amused.

"You could not have had a great deal of time to study the man's manners, Watts," he said, "nor do I think, indeed, you had a favourable opportunity."

"My wife'll bear me out, my lord," said Watts. "Ask my wife, my lord, and hear what she says."

"Why, did your wife see the fellow too?"

"Yes, my lord. He comes to the lodge just after dusk, and he sets by the fire and warms himself, and he asks questions about my lady, and—"

"Your wife did not answer his impudent inquiries? His proceeding is exactly that of a burglar who questions the servants of a family to discover the habits of the inmates of the house and the hiding-places of valuables. Your wife should have sent the man about his business, or, better still, have summoned you."

"But the man was a gentleman," persisted Watts. "He told my wife that he was an old friend of my lady, and that he knew my lady and her ladyship's first husband well. And he didn't ask about jewels nor plate, but he asked if my lady had a daughter of her first marriage living, and how many children she had. And when my wife told him that my lady had two sons he turned pale and then red and bit his lips nervous-like. And my wife says she thinks as he's some enemy that know'd my lady years ago, or else is not in his right mind, though he may be friendly to my lady, and a little queer in his head. He said he wanted to surprise my lady, and should call at Thornhurst immediate. The same man came out of the conservatory I'll swear to, my lord, if necessary."

The marquis looked surprised and thoughtful.

"No stranger has called since dusk," he said. "The man's statements to your wife look to me like a very transparent ruse to get admission into the grounds."

"He could have slipped in at the little footgate at the upper end of the lawn, my lord."

"True. The man's questions were singular for a burglar to ask. Can it be—" The marquis checked himself abruptly, and turned his face towards the shadow. "Let me see," he added, presently, in a changed voice; "at what hour was it you met the man coming out of the conservatory, Watts?"

"On the stroke of half-past six, my lord."

"Ah, yes; I remember. And at what time did he leave the lodge?"

"At a quarter-past five, my lord. My wife happened to look at the clock to see if it was time for me to be in, which we eat supper usual at half-past five, my lord; but to-night, being detained, I eats my supper at seven. The gentleman left the lodge at a quarter past five, and comes straight up the avenue towards the house. The next that is seen of him he comes out of the conservatory like a burglar, but which I'm ready to swear, my lord, he isn't one. My trimming scissars wasn't touched, and they lays in plain sight of him, and not a flower was broke. The question is, what did he do in the conservatory a whole hour and a quarter?"

The marquis started.

"That is a mere supposition of yours, Watts, that the man was in the conservatory all that time, whereas, in truth, he could not have been. I was in the conservatory at a little before six, and he was not there then."

"He might have been hidden behind a shrub," muttered the gardener, unconvinced. "He didn't call at the house, nor make himself known to the servants. He warn't anywhere about the grounds at half-past five, my lord, to my certain knowledge."

"How do you know?"

"I went to the yard shortly after five with the refuse of the plants. Then Thomas called me to help him catch a heifer as had got out of the cow yard into the grounds, and for half an hour, my lord, him

and me was chasing the beast. If the man had been in the grounds I should have seen him. Then we—Thomas and me—went into the kitchen and stayed there till dinner was nigh ready. So, my lord, the man must have come up to the house and gone round, and, seeing the conservatory door open, slipped in. And I'm sure, my lord, that he was in there among the flowers for over an hour."

The marquis began to think so too. The question that immediately suggested itself to him was, had Ignatia seen the man and been frightened by him?

"You did right to come to me with this story, Watts," he said, after a pause. "The man, of course, came for some bad purpose. Say nothing about him to any one; but, if he appear again at any time, come to me immediately and privately with the news. He is probably some burglar who would have called boldly upon some pretence had he not found an open door to enter at. Be on your guard, and don't leave an open door for him another time. I will take proper precautions for the security of the house."

The gardener, much relieved, took his departure by the garden door. The marquis secured it after him, and leaned for some moments against the man in deep thought.

"It is quite plain to my mind that the fellow was in the conservatory at the same time with my wife," he said to himself. "Could she have seen him? If she saw him, did he threaten to rob her? Or was he really a former acquaintance of hers? If he had known her, why did he come and go so secretly? Can my wife have a secret in her past? Heaven! what a question for a husband to ask, after nine years of married happiness! Ignatia is honour and truth itself. I will ask her if she saw and knew the man."

It would have been well if the marquis could have done so, for Ignatia was brave at heart, and as truthful as she was noble. Only her love for him and her noble boys made her a very coward in her fear of offending his peculiar prejudices upon the subjects of marriage and divorce.

She believed that he would cast her out of his heart and his life for ever if he knew that she had kept a secret from him during all those years—that she had a child of her first marriage living, she knew not where and how—and that, as if to insult and outrage his prejudices, she had a first husband living, who was, moreover, a villainous fellow, who protested that he "regarded her still as his wife."

That story, so long kept hidden, was not an easy one to utter for the lips of the bravest wife that ever lived. It would have been difficult even for an unloving wife. How much more difficult for a loving, tender-hearted woman who dreads her husband's displeasure or the loss of his love and confidence more than all other earthly ills!

Poor Ignatia! She was to find the path she had taken full of pitfalls. While the marquis stood alone in his study she lay in her bed upstairs restless and anguished, wishing—ah, vainly—that she had only, before her marriage, confided her whole history to Lord Thornhurst and given him back his freedom.

The marquis at length extinguished his light and returned to the parlours. His boys had long since gone to bed. He sat down with a book before the grate, but he could not read. His thoughts kept wandering to the stranger whom the gardener had seen, and to the mysterious illness of his wife.

At last, wearied and haggard, he went upstairs and knocked at his wife's door.

Martha Bates opened it softly, her finger on her lip.

"My lady is asleep," she said.

The marquis passed her silently, entering the room, and approaching the low, luxurious bed. The marchioness lay upon her pillow in an uneasy slumber, her breath coming sobbingly between her lips, her face strangely colourless. One hand was thrown above her head; the other lay on the satin coverlet, and Lord Thornhurst noticed that the slender fingers twitched nervously.

He studied her face long and intently. How noble and grand and beautiful it looked! Even in her sleep an air of purity seemed to surround the beautiful marchioness. Every line of the proud face showed character, spirit, and grandeur of soul.

"Pure as a snowdrift," thought the marquis, with a swelling heart. "When I doubt Ignatia I shall doubt Heaven itself. Has she not been to me a fore-taste of Heaven? There was a time when I doubted men and women, and prided myself on my cynicism. She restored to me my lost faith in humanity. To doubt her would be a treachery too base for words."

He stooped and kissed her, and went out softly. He came to the door once or twice later, but Martha was watching her still-sleeping mistress, and at last Lord Thornhurst flung himself upon a couch in his dressing-room, and fell asleep, not awakening until morning.

The marchioness did not appear at breakfast. She came down to luncheon, carefully dressed, but too

pale and anxious to seem like herself. Owing to the presence at the table of their young sons, Lord Thornhurst made no inquiries concerning the cause of her previous night's alarm. After the luncheon the boys accompanied their parents to the parlour, and at an early hour Lady Thornhurst retired to dress for dinner.

The noble pair were not alone together until evening, when there was about the marchioness an air of coldness so strange that her husband found himself unable to ask her the questions he desired. He did not wish to appear to suspect her, and the questions began to seem to him inquisitorial and doubting.

An unpleasant task does not grow easier by postponement, and so the marquis found it. He deferred his inquiries from day to day, and gradually a sense of distrust sprang up in his mind, and his dormant jealousy began to quicken into life and warmth. Gradually a veil of coldness grew between the noble pair, and neither sought to pierce it. Ignatia indeed welcomed it as a safeguard. She spent much time alone, and the marquis occupied himself more on his estate, finding relief from his anxieties in an out-of-door life.

At the end of a week the marchioness wrote to her father at Redruth Wold, urging him to come to her. He arrived at Thornhurst the day after he received her letter. The marquis, not expecting him, had gone for a twenty-mile ride across the country. Colonel Redruth was ushered directly into the snug and cosy private sitting-room of his daughter.

She arose and came forward to meet him, looking so thin and pale as to alarm him.

"What is the matter, my child?" he demanded, in alarm. "You are ill, or in trouble?"

The marchioness fell sobbing into his arms.

Colonel Redruth bore her to a sofa, and bent over her in surprise and grief.

The gallant officer had grown grayer in the nine years that had elapsed since the marriage of his daughter to Lord Thornhurst, and his presence was more distinguished even than formerly. He wore a heavy gray moustache, and his eyebrows, also gray, were shaggy. His figure was upright and stately, and the calm of a contented soul looked usually from his rugged features. Just now he was very naturally full of wonder and alarm.

"What is the matter, Ignatia?" he repeated.

Lady Thornhurst gently released and calmed herself.

"I am in trouble, father," she said, "and I turn first of all to you. Father, Captain Holm lives!"

"Lives! Holm lives!"

"Yes, father. He did not die in America, as we heard. He lives, and I am desperate."

"But, my poor girl, there may be some mistake. How did you hear that he lives?"

"I have seen him. He came here—to Thornhurst—a week ago."

Colonel Redruth was startled.

"Did the marquis see him?" he asked.

The marchioness shook her head. Then, in a passionate voice, and with despairing manner, she told the old Indian officer the occurrences of that night on which Holm had intruded upon her in the conservatory.

"I think Antony suspects that something is wrong," she concluded, wearily. "There has seemed to be a barrier between us since that night. He does not believe my illness to be due to natural causes, and he is angry at my going into the wet that night, the more especially as my act looked like deceit. Martha had told him that I could not be disturbed, only a moment before I came in from my night ramble. Antony may suspect a stranger's presence in the house that night. The outer door of the conservatory was open, and some one may have seen Holm."

"You have had no explanation with your husband?"

"Father, how could I explain the truth to him? I have carefully avoided all explanations. Should he know the truth, he would think I had deserved him from the first intentionally. I see where my error began. On that night before my marriage to Antony I should have told him the truth. When he said that he had a prejudice against divorced wives I should have told him outright that I was a divorced wife. If he had chosen to leave me then, I could have borne it. Now I could not bear it—I could not."

Colonel Redruth sighed.

"It was I who led you into error, Ignatia," he said, "but I thought that Holm was dead. Has not time softened Lord Thornhurst's prejudices? How would it do for me to tell him the story?"

"No, father, no," said the marchioness, sorrowfully. "The time for confession is past. I must go forward in the path on which I have entered. Perhaps I can buy Captain Holm's silence. He is poor."

"Perhaps," said the colonel, "you can buy his silence, as you say. But I have no faith in his word. This is a miserable business, Ignatia. If it were not for the peculiar nature of the marquis, I should

counsel you to a full and frank confession of the truth. But he is proud and jealous and unreasoning."

"Oh, no, not unreasonable, father!"

"And there are your boys to consider. The marquis might choose to separate from you, and take his sons with him. But that reminds me. Did Holm speak of little Georgia?"

"He has agreed to allow me to see her in London within a fortnight of his visit here. I must see my child, even if I cannot claim her. I offered him a thousand pounds for an hour's interview alone with her. Father, I think of her by day and by night, my firstborn, my only girl! I have sent for you to devise some plan for getting me to London. I must see her."

The beautiful marchioness arose and walked the floor excitedly. Her face glowed; her eyes shone feverishly. Colonel Redruth regarded her with tenderness and sympathy.

"My poor girl!" he said, softly. "You shall see her, if Holm sends you her address. I loved your lost child, and have grieved for her more than you know. No money shall stand between you and the sight of your child. More than that—since Holm is needy, I will buy the child away from him. She must be my heiress, you know. The Redruth estates must go to your first child, whether male or female. And Jacob, who really loved little Georgia, will leave her Redruth Moor. We must not allow the heiress of such great wealth to remain in the hands of Captain Holm, to be moulded to his will. Take courage, Ignatia. I will induce Holm to leave England, and to give little Georgia to us."

The marchioness became radiant. She flew to her father and kissed him in a transport of joy and gratitude.

"When we recover Georgia I will tell the marquis that she is your child who was lost in her childhood," said the colonel, cheerfully. "As to the rest, we may tell him at some future period, or we may not. I own that I see no need for the revelation. Since we adopted the practice of secrecy at the beginning, we must keep to it. An explanation now is likely to mar your happiness for ever, if not indeed to utterly wreck it. Would that I had been wise enough to have foreseen this trouble, and told Lord Thornhurst the truth before your marriage. But how could I have suspected his lordship's idiosyncrasies? How could I have guessed that Holm was not dead? How could I expect that he would appear again? I even believed, as he said, that Georgia was dead. Why did he write us falsely that she was dead?"

"To cause us to give over our search for her," answered the marchioness. "Oh, father, your sympathy and readiness to assist me have taken a load from my mind. I am eager for the summons to go to London."

That summons was, as the reader knows, delayed by Holm's non-success in finding Teesa. It came at last, to the great joy of Lady Thornhurst. Colonel Redruth mentioned at the family table his design of taking a trip to town, and asked his daughter to accompany him. She assented, as if the invitation and the manner of it had not been prearranged. Lord Thornhurst, who looked ill and preoccupied, made no objection to his wife's departure, and accordingly on Friday morning Lady Thornhurst and her father went to town, proceeding to a hotel. At ten minutes before four o'clock they entered a cab and gave the requisite directions.

CHAPTER XXII.

It was barely four o'clock when Lady Thornhurst and Colonel Redruth drew up before the lodgings of the street waif whom Captain Holm was endeavouring to palm off upon the marchioness as her daughter. The cabman alighted and knocked at the house door. Then he returned and assisted his visitors to alight. Bidding the cabman wait, Colonel Redruth gave his arm to his daughter and led her up the steps.

The door was opened at their approach by a trim housemaid, who had evidently received her instructions from Captain Holm. She ushered them into a parlour and disappeared. A few minutes later Captain Holm made his appearance.

He came in with a bold look and brazen expression of countenance, notwithstanding which he did not seem thoroughly at his ease. He halted just within the doorway, and regarded his visitors with a sardonic smile.

"I suppose you will want to see the girl at once," he said, looking from the stern-browed colonel to the pale yet haughty marchioness. "I will take you up to her."

"Tell me the room, and I will go up alone," said Lady Thornhurst. "I desire to meet her alone."

Holm frowned slightly, and looked perturbed.

"Very well," he said. "You will find her awaiting you in the room above this. The girl is not, perhaps, what you expect, Ignatia, but I have not been able to afford her the advantages due to a gentleman's daughter. You must remember also

that I have not seen her for years, and have had no opportunity to form her manners."

Lady Thornhurst became yet paler, as with foreboding, but she simply bowed coldly.

"You will be pleased to remember, Captain Holm, that you are addressing the Marchioness of Thornhurst," said Colonel Redruth, with stern haughtiness.

"In looking at her I can only remember that she was once my wife, and that she is the mother of my child," responded Holm, in a stinging voice. "However the world knows her, she is to me simply Ignatia Holm."

The pure face of the marchioness flushed. Colonel Redruth's eyes sparkled with a just anger. He would have spoken but that his daughter interposed, quietly:

"I will go upstairs, father. While I am absent I would like you to negotiate with Captain Holm for the future guardianship of my child."

Colonel Redruth opened the door for her and she went out alone. She ascended the stairs to the second floor, and paused before the door of the drawing-room, trembling, and with her hand on her heart.

It was some minutes before she could compose herself sufficiently to turn the knob and open the door. When she did so at last, and made her way into the room, she found it unoccupied.

She paused near the door and looked around her. The drawing-room was like others of its class. A fire burned brightly in the grate; a white lace hat, ornamented with a wreath of pink roses, lay on one chair; a tawdry white cape shawl was thrown carelessly across another.

The marchioness looked at those simple articles of attire with a swelling heart.

She waited near the door for a few seconds, then advanced into the room, and, with her eager eyes fixed upon a door opening into an adjoining chamber, called softly, yet eagerly:

"Georgia!"

The door of the inner room opened, and Georgina Galby, the pretty street waif, came out into the drawing-room.

A sudden mist obscured Lady Thornhurst's vision. She clutched at the back of a chair for support. Her heart-throbs sounded to her like the bating of a drum. Her mother-soul was strung to the highest pitch of excitement and eagerness.

The flower girl, who had been well tutored by Holm, rushed forward with a theatrical scream, and called out, in a high, affected voice, as one repeating a lesson:

"Mother! oh, mother!"

The word thrilled through and through the heart of the beautiful marchioness. She gasped for breath, as she well might for purely physical reasons, for Jina suddenly embraced her with a force that was almost strangling.

"Oh, mother!" cried the girl, hysterically, half believing in the excitement of the moment that the noble mother of her romantic dreams stood before her. "How beautiful and grand you are! I'm afraid you won't want to own me!"

Lady Thornhurst gently put the girl from her and looked at her steadily, as if to trace in the features before her the lovely baby face that was engraved on her heart.

Jina met her ladyship's gaze with a look of assurance. The bold light blue eyes did not flinch. The complacent smile did not desert the full, red lips. No thought derogatory to herself disturbed the self-satisfied, simple-minded flower girl. There was little character and no nobleness of soul expressed in the girl's face. Her education had not been such as to foster either. She was ignorant, vulgar, and of no great breadth of mind or soul."

The disappointment of the marchioness was too terrible for description. She read the girl in that one steady look, and retreated to a sofa, white with an awful despair.

Jina followed her closely.

"You haven't kissed me, mother," she said, disappointedly, and with an unmistakable pouting of her full lips. "You don't seem glad to see me. But that don't make no difference. I'm your daughter, any how."

Lady Thornhurst made a stern effort to regain her calmness. She had expected to find her daughter ignorant and uneducated. She knew Holm so well that she had accurately decided upon the form his revenge would take. But she had calculated upon her daughter's innate refinement, and had believed that the dainty ways of the little child would show themselves in the grown girl.

She had expected also that at sight of her child her whole soul would overflow with her great joy and tenderness—that the subtle instinct Nature has implanted in the mother's soul would assert itself, and that she should know her child, despite the years that had lain between them like a gulf. To her dismay, as she looked upon this girl, her heart seemed to die within her. She felt indeed a sentiment of repulsion towards this pretty, bold-eyed girl that shocked herself.

Half frightened at the strangeness of her emotions, she drew Jina to a seat beside her upon the sofa, and forced herself to take the girl's coarse hand, with its stunted fingers and closely bitten nails, in her own.

"I want you to answer me a few questions, Georgia," she said. "We must understand each other before we can utter words of affection. You must remember, dear, that I have not seen you since your early childhood, and that we are, sadly enough, utter strangers to each other. Now tell me, first of all, by what name you have always been known."

The girl had been, as has been said, carefully tutored in the part she was to play, and she responded, glibly:

"I've always been called Jina Galgy."

"You have been called—what?"

"Jina Galgy, my la-mother. Jina is short for Georgy or Georginy. Galgy was a name they just put on to me, not knowing my real one."

"Where did you live?"

"Whitechapel, and that way."

"With whom did you live?"

"With a Mrs. Walters. She had other girls that she'd brought up, and kept to sell flowers for her in the streets. I sold flowers."

"You! And in the streets?"

"Yes. Why, it's easy enough, my la-mother. I used to stand round the doors of the theatres and sell bouquets to gentlemen for their button-holes. It's nothing when you are brought up to it."

"And this is my daughter, my pure little innocent baby girl!" murmured the marchioness, in a broken voice.

"Well, I don't believe there's much doubt about that," returned the flower girl, tossing her head. "My father, Captain Holm, you know, left me with Mrs. Walters when I was only three year old. He went away to faring parts, and Mrs. Walters brought me up just as he'd told her to. I never went to school, nor had no education. I didn't suppose I had no father or mother livin', although I've always had an idea I was somebody, and would turn out a rich heiress, and would have my silks and diamonds. I wonder what the girls'll say at Mrs. Walters's when they sell their flowers at the doors of the theatres, and see me a sailin' in with a silk dress a trainin', and me that scornful and harty that I won't speak to 'em?"

This little reflection, so frankly expressed, was by no means a teaching of Holm. He would have been horrified had he heard it, fearing its effect upon Lady Thornhurst. It was simply an outcropping of the girl's irrepressible vulgarity and smallness of soul. The few days of teaching which Jina had received from Holm had given her only a thin polish or veneering. Not a score of years of patient instruction could bestow the refinement and delicacy which Nature had denied her.

Lady Thornhurst dropped the girl's hand. The tenderness, the light, the glow, faded from her imperial face.

"Have these girls been kind to you—Jina?" she asked, finding herself unable to call the impostor by the name that had been so sacred to her.

"Kind? Oh, yes," said Jina, flippantly. "They thought everything of me, but they were really jealous because the gentlemen gave me more for my flowers than they got for theirs. I was prettier than the other girls, you know," she added, complacently.

The girl's bold beauty was no longer pleasing in Lady Thornhurst's eyes. She had come of a generous and noble race, and anything that savoured of ingratitude or meanness was utterly repulsive to her. Suddenly, as it were, the scales of a too-blind confidence dropped from her eyes. The dormant mother's instinct asserted itself.

She knew, with the abruptness of a revelation from Heaven, that the girl was not her daughter.

Her noble features gathered a sternness of expression that awed the weak and silly accomplice of Captain Holm. Her glorious face acquired an awful beauty. Jina shrank before her in fear and awe.

The marchioness arose and looked down upon the girl.

"Jina," she said, sternly, "you have been telling and acting a falsehood! You are not my child!"

"I am—I am," muttered Jina, sullenly.

"I know that you are not my child," said the marchioness, calmly. "My child could not have degenerated to your level, whatever her breeding. She was by nature generous, sweet, tender, and true. You are not she. I know that I never gave birth to you, and even an angel could not make me believe it!"

Jina began to whimper. Her castles in the air were falling at her feet.

"Then you won't give me diamonds and silks and a carriage and a fine home!" she said, sniffing.

"You cared more about the fine things than about finding a mother, then!" exclaimed Lady Thornhurst, with a strange smile. "You have failed in your scheme, my girl. Or, more properly, it is

Captain Holm who has failed. I shall take the trouble to find out Mrs. Walters and learn your true history. I believe you to be a virtuous, simple-minded girl. Go back to your humble trade, and be contented with it. Remember, my girl, that diamonds and fine clothes do not bring happiness or contentment to their possessor. All my fine possessions have failed to fill the void in my heart. Go back to your humble friends, and try to be more deserving of their kindness."

Lady Thornhurst walked to the farther window, still in a great agitation. She knew that this girl was not her daughter. Where then was her daughter? Why had not Captain Holm produced her? Was she dead? Why had he brought an imposter in her stead?

With a great sinking at her heart the marchioness decided in her own mind that her child was really dead.

She came back to the weeping flower girl, and took out the small silver portemonnaie in which were hidden bank-notes to the value of a thousand pounds, the sum she had promised to pay Captain Holm for an interview with her daughter.

"Jina," she said, kindly, "I am going now. You and I will never meet again. I bear no malice against you for the wrong to which you lent yourself. You have fallen into bad hands—that is all. Now I will give you twenty pounds if you will answer me three questions honestly and truly. Will you do this?"

The flower girl looked up at the lady through disfiguring tears. She saw that the marchioness was firm and decided, although so quiet. She knew that her chance for the honours and luxuries she had craved was gone for ever.

After her first pang of chagrin and sorrow, Jina, who was of a thrifty and practical nature, despite her absurdly romantic ideas on the subject of her origin, reflected that, as she could not get what she had aimed at, twenty pounds were by no means to be despised.

"Twenty from her and twenty from the captor," reflected Jina, "makes forty pounds, and forty pounds'll buy jewelry and silks no end. I'll marry Kit Asko off hand. If he asks where I've been this week I'll tell him the truth. I don't believe this Lady Thrombus is my mother, and I shouldn't want her to be, with great black eyes boring right through you like an augur! Fine clothes are well enough, but who wants them if one has got to behave continually as if they was in a Bethel? I'd rather have the money and Kit than this proud, fine lady for a mother!"

Having come to this sage conclusion, Jina communicated her willingness to reply to the three questions Lady Thornhurst might choose to ask.

The marchioness counted out twenty glittering sovereigns upon her hand. At sight of them the girl became eager. Her eyes shone like a cat's.

"First tell me," said her ladyship, "do you know your real parents?"

"No, my lady; I'm an orfing. I was left by my own folks. I's pose they were rich."

"Did Captain Holm place you in the care of Mrs. Walters?"

"I don't know, my lady. I never see the captor till a week ago nearly. I was a standing outside the Haymarket Theatre, when up steps the captor and asks me for to walk with him. We went down to Charing Cross, my lady, and the captor says as my mother wanted for to see me. And he fetched me here."

"Do you believe that I am your mother?"

The girl hesitated, but the stern eyes of the marchioness compelled an answer. Afraid of the pale and haughty lady, Jina at last stammered out:

"No, my lady. I think as how the whole thing is a plant of the captor's. He's to get a thousand pounds; and if you're not took in, I'm to go home and to have twenty pounds for my trouble along of the captor."

Lady Thornhurst drew a long sigh of relief. She emptied the bright coins into the girl's hand, and gave her a few words of kindly advice as to her future.

Then she turned and left the room, descending to the parlour below.

Colonel Redruth and Captain Holm were in close conversation—by no means friendly, however. The former was saying, at the moment of his daughter's appearance:

"I will give you ten thousand pounds, Captain Holm, to give up my grand-daughter to us, and agree never to see her or molest Lady Thornhurst again!"

"I will give up the girl for that amount," answered Holm, lazily, "but I will not agree for any sum never to molest my wife again."

Lady Thornhurst came forward, her face aglow with scornful defiance.

"Do not offer him one penny for the girl, father," she said. "She is not of my blood. I reject her utterly. Moreover, she has confessed to the conspiracy between her and Captain Holm!"

Colonel Redruth's amazement was lost sight of in the awful fury of the baffled plotter. He could hardly comprehend that Lady Thornhurst had been astute enough to defeat his well-concocted scheme. Before he could give utterance to his maniacal rage the door again opened, and Jina, sullen, angry, and disappointed, entered the room, attired for the street, and with a bundle in her hands.

"It's all up, captor," she said, approaching him, and holding out her hand. "The game is played, and I am going back to Whitechapel and old Mother Walters and Kit. Give me my twenty pounds, what you promised me in case we failed, you know. The thing's busted, and I want my money!"

(To be continued.)

A HUSBAND'S REVENGE.

THE most difficult thing in the world for a woman to do is to get ready to go anywhere. There is nothing woman will resent more quickly or fiercely than an intimation that she may possibly miss the train. Our friend, Brayfogle, gives us an instance of this.

Bray was supposed to take the ten-o'clock train, as he was going to visit some relatives in the country. Having suffered on previous occasions for in-judicious suggestions, Bray thought that for once he would let things take their natural course. So he sipped his coffee and ate his eggs on toast while madame curled and powdered dancing attendance on the looking-glass continually until she had at length completed some mysterious and wonderful arrangement at the back of her head.

Then Bray sat by the stove for an hour and read the morning paper, while madame still continued to get ready. At last, just as he had reached the final paragraph of news matter, and was beginning on the advertisements, madame tied her bonnet strings under her chin, took one long, lingering, loving look at the image reflected in the glass, and sweetly announced:

"Well, my dear, I'm ready."

"Ready for what?" asked Bray, in well-affected astonishment.

"To go to the station to be sure," said Mrs. Brayfogle, tarty.

"Oh," said Bray, "I'd forgotten. Well, madame," continued he, looking at his watch, "that train has been gone thirteen minutes. Just keep on your things and you'll be ready for the train to-morrow morning."

We draw a veil over what followed. We are assured, however, that the next morning Mrs. B. was ready an hour earlier than was really necessary.

H. H.

A BAD EXCUSE IS BETTER THAN NONE.—The great Prussian excuse for stealing the clocks from French mantelpieces has been the carrying off by the great Napoleon of the timepiece which adorned the study of Frederick the Great at Potsdam.

THE BLACK LETTER PRAYER BOOK OF 1636.—Mr. Sanders, assistant-keeper of public records, gives, in his annual report, an account of his superintending, for the Ritual Commissioners, the photostatic fac-simile of the Black Letter Prayer Book of 1636, with the manuscript notes and alterations made in 1661, from which was fairly written the Prayer Book subscribed by the Convocation, and annexed to the Act of Uniformity. Mr. Sanders thinks the Black Letter Book will be found to differ from the "Sealed Books" throughout in punctuation and the employment of capitals; and as it is evident, by the alterations made by them in this respect, that the Commissioners appointed to examine the Sealed Books with the original manuscript copy attached great importance to punctuation, the inference appears to Mr. Sanders to be that the MS. copy is not a true copy of the Black Letter Book—at any rate as to punctuation and capitals. In spelling the Sealed Books differ from the Black Letter Book throughout. The revisions made in the Black Letter Book are not always consistent. Passages intended to correspond with one another contain differences of expression; a MS. rubric directs the priest so to order the wine that he may with the more readiness take the cup into his "hands;" but when this act is to be done a MS. rubric directs him to take the cup in his "hand." The Gospels and Epistles, being ordered to be "all corrected after the last translation," differ greatly from those in the Black Letter Book. "Sufficient unto the day is the travail thereof" is, in the modern version, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." In the 68th Psalm "Praise him in his name, ye, and rejoice before him," is now changed to "Praise him in his name, Jah, and rejoice before him;" in the Sealed Book, however, the original reading is preserved. The Black Letter Book has been returned to the library of the House of Lords.

The Song of the Pilgrim.

Words from "IVANHOE."

Vivace.

PIANO.

p

Scherzo e dolce.

rall.

f

An-na Ma-rie, love, up is the sun, An-na Ma-rie, love, morn is be-gun;
 An-na Ma-rie, love, up is the morn, The hunt-er is wind-ing blithe sounds on his horn; The

p stac.

Mists are dis-pell-ing, love, birds sing-ing free, Then up and a-rouse thee, love,
 E-cho rings mer-ry from rock and from tree, 'Tis time to a-rouse thee, love,

An-na Ma-rie. Mists are dis-pell-ing, love, birds sing-ing free, Then up and a-
 An-na Ma-rie. The E-cho rings mer-ry from rock and from tree, 'Tis come to a-

colla parte.

arpa.

ad lib.

- rouse thee, love, An-na Ma-rie.
 - wake thee, love, An-na Ma-rie.

brillante.

pì lento.

fp

rall.

R.G.

Anna Marie, love, up in the morn,
 The hunter is winding blithe sounds on his horn;
 The echo rings merry from rock and from tree.
 'Tis time to arouse thee, love, Anna Marie.

Addenda.
 Anna Marie, love, list to my song:
 Wake from thy slumbers, and join the gay throng;
 Beauty divine, love, charming to see,
 Come forth and shine love, Anna Marie.

**POINT LACE INSERTION,
STAND FOR A VASE, ORNAMENTS FOR A
SOFA, QUILT, &c., &c.**

POINT LACE INSERTION.—No. 1.

This is suitable for aprons, etc. Full directions for working have been given in former numbers.

**STAND FOR A
VASE OR LAMP.
No. 2.**

This stand is composed of plaited straw surrounded with pinked strips of green velvet and white cloth. The embroidery is in gold thread and silk of various colours pinked at the edges. Green buttons are used as additional trimming.

SQUARE ORNAMENTS FOR A QUILT.

No. 3 & 5.

THESE ornaments, which would adorn a covering for a child's bed or ottoman, should be of a deep rich crimson. Let the design be embroidered in straw-coloured floss silk.

**SQUARE BRAIDED ORNAMENT FOR A
SOFA OR COUCH COVER.—No. 4.**

SUPPOSING the cover to be of brown alpaca, this ornament would look well in rose-coloured silk, braided from pattern in woollen braid of the same tint as the cover. Purchase the surrounding passementerie at a fancy-work shop.

PARIS FASHIONS.

If we were to define the character of our present fashions and what they contain in the germ, we should call them a transition style, which looks forward to a future of simplicity, without letting go, however, of the extreme elegance of the past. We have by no means abandoned over skirts, the most graceful of all fashions; but their draping is much less complicated and their trimming much less elaborate.

Whatever may be the material chosen for a summer dress, whether foulard, lawn, mohair, or simple mousseline de laine, the trimmings are almost always composed of two shades of the same colour; thus, to cite but one example which is repeated in every shade and ma-

toilets, and none are made this season. A lady who should appear in the daytime with a trained dress would look as ridiculous as if she wore white gloves and diamonds in the street.

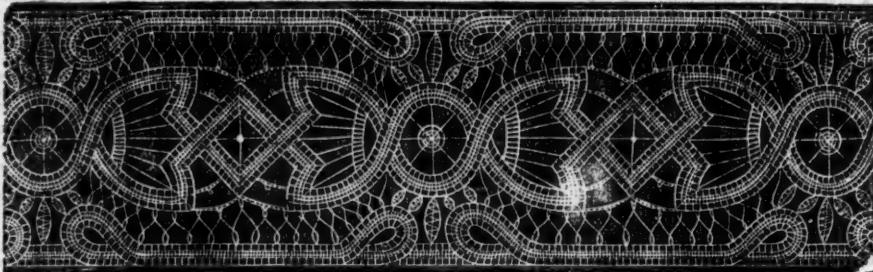
The most popular garment of the season is the polonaise. It is adapted to every style of dress, and serves as well for travelling as for walking and visit-

embroidered in dots or sprigs, in which case the trimming is composed of rushes and flounces of white muslin, or of the material used for the polonaise. For a long time it has been a source of regret that white muslin dresses could not be worn in summer, which was impossible while people persisted in wearing trained dresses in the daytime, for this kind of dress could not be made in muslin; moreover, the style of draping and looping the overskirts was too complicated for them, as in sitting down the folds and drapery were crushed out of all shape. But now, with the polonaise, which is neither very long nor elaborately trimmed, and can be raised or put aside in sitting, these graceful and comfortable dresses can be worn with impunity. White muslin over skirts are also worn over plain silk or foulard dresses.

Apart from the polonaise, which is only a modification of the large casques in vogue some two years ago, few other wrappings are worn except short, full, slashed paletot, of the same material as the dress, whatever that may be. The paletot of the moment is the Garde Mobile, which is full, but pleated a little in the back by two tabs trimmed with metal buttons. Similar buttons are on the cuffs and the front of the paletot, which is turned back at the top, forming large revers.

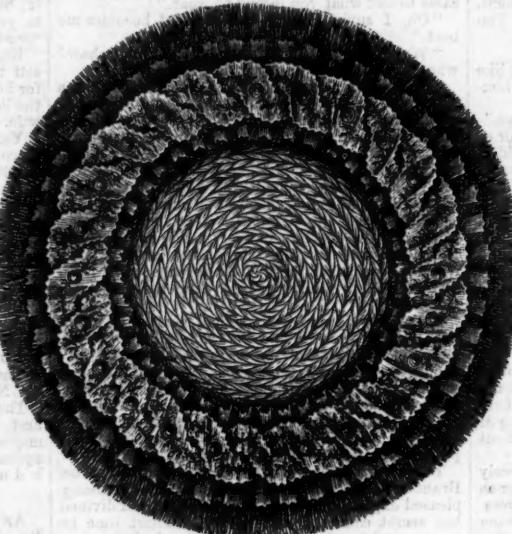
The most elegant dresses are of light foulard or silk, always of a neutral tint, such as écrù, mauve, and gray above all—gray in every shade. For these dresses the waist, made with large basques in the form of a tight-fitting casque, almost always has a Louis XIV. vest—that is, very long in front and descending below the belt. This vest rarely differs in colour from the dress, but is always of another and generally of a darker shade, which is also adopted for the trimmings of the dress, ruches, flounces, bias folds, or rolls. The cuffs are likewise of the same shade as the dress; and lastly, the bonnet itself is made—or if of straw is trimmed—with the two shades used for the dress, or else with two shades of a different colour that harmonizes with it.

Besides flounces, the trimmings of dresses are composed of bias folds, not separated, but, on the contrary, slightly overlapping each other; or rolls separated and numbering five



POINT LACE INSERTION.—No. 1.

ing toiletts. Before the introduction of the polonaise a lady was obliged to put on first a skirt, secondly an over skirt, thirdly a waist, fourthly a voluminous sash, and fifthly a paletot. Now three of the aforesaid five



STAND FOR A VASE.—No. 2.

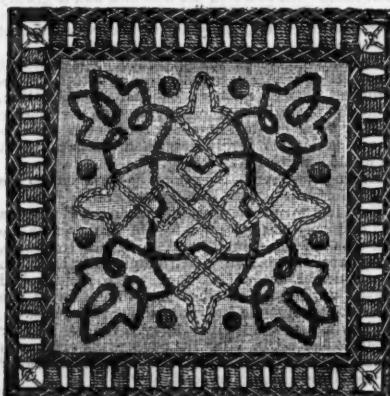
articles are got rid of, and dressing is made an expeditious affair. The skirt of the polonaise is trimmed in any style that may be desired, and is cut with or



ORNAMENT FOR A QUILT.—No. 3.

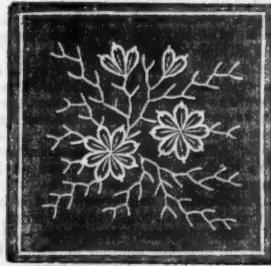
terial, we saw a dress recently made by a celebrated modiste, with an under skirt of pearl gray lawn trimmed with a flounce four inches wide of the same material, but bound with a darker shade; above this flounce were three bias folds, each four-fifths of an inch wide, the first of the same shade as the dress, the second of the darker shade, and the third like the first. The bias folds overlapped each other so as to cover the seams. The over skirt was trimmed in the same manner, but with narrower bias folds and flounce. The waist was in the form of a tight-fitting casque with two separate and pointed tabs behind, edged with the same trimming, but narrower, as that on the skirt and over skirt. Half-flowing sleeves trimmed like the waist; the latter had two points in front, which, however, were much shorter than those in the back. This dress is worn in the street without a wrapping, shawl, or mantlet of any kind.

Long or trained dresses are never worn, we may say; these dresses are reserved solely for evening



BAIDED ORNAMENT FOR A SOFA.—No. 4.

joined to a half-fitting waist in the form of a small paletot, so that the garment is put on in the twinkling of an eye. The polonaise is made of black cashmere or the material of the suit, and is worn over any kind of skirt, even black and white striped percale, linen, organdy, or écrù pongee, or even white muslin trimmed with white insertion and guipure, or else



ORNAMENT FOR A QUILT.—No. 5.

or seven. When only three of these rolls are used they are set on nearer together, and a narrow-pleated ruche, made of the material taken double, is set under the first and last. This trimming is often of silk on a wool or silk and wool dress. Our modistes are also making up a great many dresses of mousseline de laine—charming fabric—to which we are right in returning, as it has been too long abandoned. Lastly, we see this year a new kind of striped black and white percale, of which many elegant and inexpensive dresses will be made.

Light silken fabrics, such as satin-faced silk and dead-lustre iron grenadines, such also as crêpe de Chine, and Osaca crêpe—closely resembling Chinese fabrics—are still used for the most elegant toiletts as over skirts, to be worn over silk or foulard dresses. White, moreover, is now associated with colours to which it has hitherto been deemed incongruous. Over skirts of white muslin, worsted grenadine, crêpe de Chine, and Osaca crêpe are worn over brown, gray, and sometimes even black silk dresses. Too

violent a contrast of colours is avoided in all the details of the toilet. For instance, over skirts of a neutral tint are no longer worn with a bright-coloured dress, but rather one of the same, or, at most, a lighter or darker shade. The distaste which the Parisian ladies manifest for all but neutral colours in dress is extending and becoming more strongly marked. Not a single lady is to be seen now in the daytime in a dress of bright blue, deep green, or red of any shade whatsoever, but always in black or gray, in all seasons, and even, Havanah brown or mode in summer; or, at most, violet—the Prussian colour—and its various shades. Decided colours are only used for the accessories to a toilet, such as cravats and bonnet trimmings.

WHAT A RASH DECISION DID.

"Is this your final answer?"
"I suppose so. I would not say 'No' if I did not mean it."

The girl who uttered these words raised a pair of very blue eyes to the dark, sullen face of her companion, Charles Brandon, who had just at that moment asked her to be his wife. She was pulling a moss-rose to pieces with about as much compunction as she had refused the man, and not the slightest bit abashed at the serious turn the conversation had taken during the walk through the woods to her own door.

"Give me a reason, Kate."

"Well," she replied, after pondering for a moment, "I don't know that there's any necessity for it. You have my answer, and that should be sufficient."

"Then you are a vain, heartless—"

He was about to launch out into something like invective, but by a strong effort he checked himself.

"Never mind," he said. "I bid you good-bye."

Her first impulse was resentment at his manner of addressing her, but on second thought, and considering that her refusal of him had caused an allowable excitement in his feelings, Kate Miller laughingly tossed her fair, brownish curls back off her shoulders, saucily throwing the red-hand leaves she held crumpled in her hand at him—but he had gone. She had just made up her mind to reason with him, and to tell him, in the old stereotyped fashion, that though she could not love him she would always be his friend and that he would soon find another to love him. But now he had gone, and it made her feel sad to think that by her levity she had been the means of wounding the heart of a fellow-being. Her gentle nature reproached her for the act; and though she inwardly admitted to herself that she cared nothing for his love, yet a shade of gloom passed over her features, showing that something like a pang of remorse was occasioned by her having, without giving a reason, refused him so abruptly.

In the meantime he had gone striding fiercely over the meadows of daisies—longing to crush her as easily under his heel as he did the innocent flowers. He went until the woods hid him from view, then he turned and looked at the cottage—looked at it so intently that one could almost have believed his unfathomable black eyes had preternatural sight and wood and plaster had no power to hide its inmates from his gaze. His nature was such as could ill brook any interference with his will, and his passions were so fierce that his love was turned to hate.

"Ha! my lady!" he exclaimed, passionately, "toss your dainty head; scornfully reject my suit; tilt up two astonished eyes to mine and laugh; but I'll be even with you yet, for as sure as Heaven you shall marry me; then—"

Charles Brandon went back to his business, his regular features as composed as usual, and no one would have supposed, from his steady hand, his clear brain, and the manner in which he balanced his accounts, that but a few hours previously his whole being had been convulsed with passion.

About three weeks later, in the same place where Charles Brandon had received his songé, Kate Miller stood, overshadowed by the dark foliage of the trees—but not alone. At her side, and with one arm circling her waist, speaking sweet nonsense in her willing ear, was a young man, whose bronzed face and clear gray eyes indicated one who had battled with the world and had full reliance in his own ability to meet its dangers.

He had been a playmate of Kate's when both were children, and had only recently returned from where he had been fortunate enough to secure what scarcely one in every thousand does—a fortune.

He had met hardships in every shape, and knew well what a treasure he had in the love of Kate. It was for such a day as this he had toiled and worked so hard, and his boyish recollections of her had nerve his hand and steadied his head in many an exciting scene. Now were his utmost expectations realized, for Kate had just told him how well she loved him, and how fondly she had borne the recollection of him throughout his years of absence.

Harry Cullen, for such was his name, felt exalted as one does under the influence of some ethereal draught, in the possession of so much happiness; and if a presentiment of some foreshadowing evil crossed his mind it was quickly dispelled by a glance from the soft blue eyes of his companion.

"Tell me once again that you love me, Kate."

"A 'Yes,'" scarcely audible above the murmuring sighing of the trees, was the response.

"And always will?"

"Always," she replied; "for ever."

"Then am I the happiest of men. For this world I brave again the perils and dangers of my wandering life thrice over."

For hours they wandered up and down, scarce heading the fast-departing twilight, so wrapt were they in each other's company, until approaching night warned them it was time to part. So, fondly clinging her, he bade adieu, and unwillingly departed from the spot hallowed to him by associations with his love and treasure.

Many were the envious glances cast at Kate by the young ladies for having won the heart of Harry Cullen, as not a few of them had entered the lists against her.

Among the number was Kate's bosom friend, Mary Gardiner, a dark-eyed brunette of some twenty summers.

"Kate, my dear," said Mary, running in one morning, "have you heard the news?"

"No," said Kate; "what about?"

"Why, there's to be a grand ball on Thursday next at the Town Hall. Everybody will be there, so I came to ask what you intend to wear."

"Oh, I suppose plain white; that becomes me best."

"Well; now mind look your best. But, pshaw! who is there worth dressing for in this place?"

The evening came, and Mary Gardiner, who was acknowledged to be the belle, endeavoured by every art to engage the attention of Harry Cullen, whom his part felt flattered by her preference, little dreaming of the jealous eyes that were watching his every action. He danced with her, and talked, until suddenly he remembered with a start, as if waking from a dream, that the magnetic spells of this girl's voice and manner had so engrossed his time as to make him entirely negligent of Kate. He hastened to her side, and, in the most winning manner, apologized for his long absence; but Kate was hurt, deeply hurt, at this sudden strange dejection.

Perhaps pride and jealousy had something to do with it, for she told him she was sorry to be the means of depriving him of such pleasant company, and insisted on his leaving her. He implored her; but she, seeing the fair hold she had on his affections, was determined to punish him, for this one evening at least, by refusing to dance with him, and also by showing him that, if he could flirt, she had a perfect right to do the same.

Twice during the evening she had found Charles Brandon's eyes fixed on her with a singularly pleased expression on his face, as if he had divined her secret cause of trouble. In a short time he came round to where she was, and asked the pleasure of a dance.

At another time she would have refused, but now was her opportunity for revenge. What better chance could happen to prove her spirit than by dancing with his rival? She knew these two men hated each other on her account, and to gratify her anger she danced with Brandon, which act estranged her from Harry during the remainder of the evening.

The next morning Harry Cullen, being sad at heart and yearning to make his peace with Kate, determined to call on her; but, on consideration, thinking it would be advisable to give her time to recover from her bad humour, sent her a note instead, asking her forgiveness, and intimating that he would see her that evening.

Having despatched the note, he went out to the woods for a stroll with his dog and gun.

Kate had spent an unhappy night; bad dreams had disturbed her rest; the face of Brandon, as she had seen it when she refused to become his wife, malignant and vindictive, had haunted her, and even the remembrance of his face when dancing had caused unpleasant recollections. She fancied she had detected a malicious smile about the mouth.

Then her quarrel with Harry. Would he ever speak to her again, after the outrageous manner in which she had treated him? Could she expect it? Or could she justify her conduct?

And, oh, how she loved him! It made her almost heart-sick to remember how, in her vindictive anger, she had scornfully turned away from him, while he gazed at her so reproachfully.

Thus she racked and tormented herself about him, wondering what would become of her if he deserted her.

She felt unable longer to endure the misery, and at last found relief in a flood of tears. Presently a knock came to the door. She listened intently and

with a fluttering heart, hoping against hope that it might be her darling Harry.

But no, 'twas not his voice. The girl came and handed her a note. She glanced at the direction.

Oh, joy! It was from Harry—her own Harry!

Calmly and quietly she spent the day—almost happy—reading his note over and over again, and longing intently for the evening, which, with its darkness, would usher in his beloved presence.

Never, to her imagination, did a day seem so long. The sun, with his hot, powerful rays, would he never set? Would the soft twilight never appear?

But hark! What crowd is that along the road? What is that they carry so gently?

She goes to the window and asks the information from some bystander. He informs her that it is the dead body of a man found in the woods, killed by the accidental discharge of a gun.

She shudders at the tale, and wonders how his sorrowing friends will bear the loss. Perhaps he has a wife to mourn for him; perhaps some fond girl who will be heartbroken at the news!

Having left the window, she suddenly returns, thinking herself stupid at not having inquired the name. Perhaps it might be some one known to her—when she was horror-stricken at seeing her Harry, pale and bleeding, carried by!

She shrieks "I killed him!" and falls back in a deathlike swoon.

When Kate returned to consciousness all the gloom and misery of a lifetime seemed concentrated in that one moment. Poor Kate Miller! The shock was dreadful. She thought she never would outlive it; but time is the sovereign healer of all things, and in youth especially months accomplish what years cannot do in maturity.

Reader, was she heartless? She never asked herself that question when she took Charles Brandon for better, for worse. In less than one year after the hour of that terrible suffering she became his wife.

Years rolled on, bringing a greater amount of sorrow than joy to Kate Brandon. Little children nestled in her arms but for a short while, then were carried to their graves; and, worse than all, it had been one long warfare, one continued struggle, between her husband and herself—the indomitable spirit he could not conquer—the temper he could not tame. A good, devoted mother, an excellent housewife, but a companion, adviser, guide to this unnatural, heartless, pitiless man—never.

But the time had come for her, and the great mystery of death was closing around her. Charles Brandon had gone out in the morning, carelessly inquiring "how she felt."

The answer received was:

"No better; send the doctor as you pass."

The doctor came, but the great reaper arrived first, and Kate Brandon was lying in the awful majesty of death when her husband looked upon her again. She had fought the battle. Let us hope she had won the crown.

F. L. N.

ANTIQUARIAN DISCOVERIES ON LOCH ETIVE.—Dr. Angus Smith, of Manchester, who has been exploring in a large moss on the shores of Loch Etive for a few weeks back, has discovered the remains of a lake dwelling, the platform of which is sixty feet in diameter, with the dwelling in the middle fifty feet in length by twenty-eight feet in breadth. He also discovered in a large cairn a megalithic structure, consisting of two chambers, each twenty feet in length, connected by a narrow passage nearly as long. The Rev. R. J. Maitland, of Dumbarton, who, along with several others, has visited the remains, believes no other cairn like it has been as yet discovered in Scotland. It allies itself more to that of New Grange in Ireland than any other, although it is much smaller. One broken urn and the remains of four others were also discovered.

NATIONAL DECADENCE.—Will you be surprised to hear that the edict issued by the Patriotic Society at Berlin concerning the toilet of the ladies has met with no success? What will Bismarck say when he comes back to Berlin and finds his honest *Berlinoise* gone back as far as in them lies to French fashions and scraps of false hair? Alas! so it is; and the *Gazette de la Croix*, Bismarck's organ, declares that the decadence of the nation cannot be more clearly proved than by this want of patriotic taste. The *Gazette* grows pious on the subject, and says, moreover, that it should be woman's task to inspire virtue and purity of thought in man, and that for this purpose female costume should be uniform, simple, and lasting; in other words, the truly virtuous woman should be clothed in the sole robe of righteousness, charity, and virtue! Dear me! Wouldn't this be rather a hazardous experiment? And, Mr. Bismarck, do you think it really would answer the purpose suggested by the *Gazette de la Croix*?

THE DRAGOON AND THE CLODHOPPER.—Returning home through Frimley (writes a correspondent who describes the march of the 1st Division

from Aldershot to Chobham), we had an opportunity of seeing the cavalry vedettes, who were well placed, and certainly looked as if no one should pass that way to whom they said "Nay." They were a little puzzled at the situation, and no wonder, for it is something new in England for single cavalry soldiers to be placed on roads watching for an enemy who never appears. One fine open-faced English dragoon was sitting immovable on his horse, facing outwards towards Hartford Bridge Flat. His face was calm and impassive as that of a Greek hero, or a sentry at the Horse Guards. Within three feet of him sat, almost immovable, on the fence, a small village boy, quite absorbed in contemplation of the splendid horseman. As we passed, neither of them looked at us, and the impression naturally made by the pair was that they would sit there for ever—the hero on guard for the sake of duty, the boy held by the power of fascination.

FACETIE.

A man in Schenectady advertises a clock for sale which "keeps time like a tax-gatherer." Here's a chance to get "a regulator na is a regulator."

DEAN SWIFT said: "It is with narrow-necked people as it is with narrow-necked bottles: the less they have in them the more noise they make in pouring it out."

A MAN frequently admits that he was in the wrong, but a woman—never—she was only "mistaken." Yet she is miss-taken when she is married, and perhaps the husband is the same.

SUGGESTIVE AMBIGUITY.—A traveller being in a coffee-house with some gentlemen was largely drawing on the credulity of the company. "Where did you say all these wonders happened, sir?" asked a gentleman present. "I can't exactly say," replied the traveller, "but somewhere in Europe—Russia, I think." "I should rather think it aly," replied the other.

AN END IN VIEW.—A countryman travelling for the first time on one of the South London trams, and wishing to get out, gave a vigorous pull at the bell-strap extending along the centre of the car, and the result was a sharp ring from both bells. "What are you ringing both ends for?" exclaimed the irritated conductor. "Because I wish the thing to stop at both ends," replied the rustic.

NOAH CLARK'S BOY.—A gentleman riding round an estate that he had recently bought came to a gate in a lane which was opened by a boy with a respectful bow. "Whose boy are you, my little man?" said he. "Noah Clark's boy, sir," was the reply. On his return some hours after the same boy appeared and opened the gate for him. The gentleman thanked the little fellow and asked, not recognizing the lad, "Whose boy are you?" "The same man's boy I was this morning, sir," replied the little fellow, gravely.

A GOOD ANSWER BY AN OLD WOMAN.—One day lately an official, a stranger in the village, connected with the post-office, at head quarters in Edinburgh, paid Killin a visit on business. After passing the Bridge of Dechart, and when he reached the smithy, he saw an old woman standing at her door, when the following dialogue took place:—Official: "Will you be so kind, missis, as to tell me where the post-office is here?" Old Woman: "I'll soon do that, sir. Look up. Do you see that wire over your head?" Official: "I do." Old Woman: "Well, then, keep your eye on and follow it, and ye will soon come to the post-office, as it is at the very end of that telegraph wire." Official: "I am much obliged to you, my good woman. Good morning." So the official walked on laughing.

A ROYAL "MUFF."—The following anecdote was told with great glee at a dinner by William IV., then Duke of Clarence:—"I was riding in the park the other day, on the road between Toddington and Hampton Wick, when I was overtaken by a butcher's boy, on horseback, with a tray of meat under his arm. 'Nice pony, that of yours, old gentleman,' said he. 'Pretty fair,' was my reply. 'Mine's a good un, too,' rejoined he, 'and I'll frit you to Hampton Wick for a pot of beer.' I declined the match, and the butcher boy, as he stuck his single spur into his horse's side, exclaimed, with a look of contempt, 'I thought you were only a muff!'" This anecdote is told of George III., who accepted the challenge, beat the butcher boy, and gave him a guinea besides. "Muff" was not a word in use at the time William IV. was Duke of Clarence. Still it is a good story, but better not moralized.

Mitrailleuses are now on trial in Russia which can fire 6,000 rounds in 24 minutes, at a range of 4,000 paces.

AN ORIGINAL FORM OF PETITION.—It is stated that amongst the papers which were found at the Elysée is a petition, dated 1849, from a pension-

hunter to Louis Napoleon, then President of the Republic, who is prayed by the petitioner to "confer to me the pension which I have received for the last ten years from the infamous and execrable Louis Philippe."

EMMELINE.

"TWAS when the summer's day was done,
And evening mists began to rise,
When burning stars peeped one by one
From out the deep, dark azure skies,
When silence reigned around, above
That first I told my tale of love.

"Twas not at Mammon's shrine I bowed,
Nor yet to one of noble race
That I eternal worship vowed.
At that still hour in that sweet place;
But to a little friendless child
Whose witchery had my heart beguiled.

Such pretty, winning ways she had,
This wilful little love of mine,
A face that could not well look sad;
The great dark eyes would burn and shine
With such a merry light in them,
Outrivaling e'en the choicest gem.

Such eyes they were, so soft and brown,
And yet so strangely bright withal,
That just one minute she'd cast down,
And let their long dark lashes fall
And sweep the cheek of crimson stain,
Then flash their beauty up again.

Such wondrous waves of chestnut hair,
But golden in the sun's bright ray,
That could not with the utmost care
Be coaxed to hide itself away;
But curled and waved and floated still,
And sported at its own free will.

And such a pretty, graceful form,
And such sweet tones so soft and low,
A tender heart so true and warm,
No wonder that I loved her so;
Yet scarcely sixteen years had shed
Their snows and sunshine o'er her head.

She listened while I told my love
In fiery youth's impassioned tone;
The crescent moon shone clear above,
Her bright rays all around were thrown,
Making the face, so fair and bright,
Still fairer 'neath the mellowing light.

The brown eyes drooped beneath my gaze,
As my wild words fell on her ear,
More shyly than in other days;

I took the hand so white and fair,
And stroked the velvet finger tips—
E'en dared to press them to my lips.

She let them linger then in mine,
Nor drew them from me in hot haste;
I ventured then my arm to twine
About the small and slender waist;
I kissed the lips so fresh and fair,
And fondly stroked the waving hair.

"And can you love me, little one?"

I asked her as she nestled there;
Her eyes no longer full of fun,
But graver than they ever were;
"I, who am older far than you,
Say, can you love me? tell me true!"

I saw two pearly teardrops roll
Adown the fair and rounded cheek,
Then round my neck two soft arms stole;

I listened then to hear her speak.
"Dear Edwy, yes, I love you well,
Far more than any words can tell.

"But I am such a simple child,
What can you find to love in me?"
And then she turned and archly smiled,
The old bright smile I loved to see;
"Oh, Edwy, you so rich and high,
And I a child of poverty!"

But, gazing on the radiant face,

"What cared I, loving as I did,
That she was not of noble race?
I did but love her more indeed,
And long'd to shelter one so fair
From danger, poverty, and care.

And so I hushed her fears to rest,
And when two happy years had passed
I took the sweet dove to my nest,
And perfected my bliss at last;

And though she owned no shining gold
She's proved a mine of wealth untold.

Sweet little child-wife, Emmeline,
So beautiful, so good, and true,
How happy we have ever been,
And yet we've had our troubles too;
But, looking back through all the years,
Life's sunshine far exceeds its tears.

And as I gaze upon her now,
No longer young and fair as when
I left my first kiss on her brow,
I seem to love her more than then,
And still the old bright smile I see
That first had such a charm for me.

Heaven bless thee, oh! my Emmeline,
Long may we live together here,
And when we quit this earthly scene,
Oh, may we in a brighter sphere,
Freed from all fear of death and pain,
Together with our Saviour reign.

E. W. E. A.

STATISTICS.

GERMAN KILLED AND WOUNDED.—The following is given as the detailed account of the losses of the German army in the last war:

I.—OFFICERS.				
	Dead	Wounded	Missing	Total
North German Confederation	918	2,972	30	3,920
Bavaria	156	584	—	720
Wurtemburg	25	64	—	89
Baden	32	133	—	154
Hesse	44	63	—	107
	1,135	3,795	30	4,900

II.—NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS AND MEN.				
	Dead	Wounded	Missing	Total
North German Confederation	14,833	71,793	5,902	92,533
Bavaria	1,524	10,217	—	11,741
Wurtemburg	664	1,688	—	2,352
Baden	424	2,578	263	3,254
Hesse	681	1,467	—	2,148
	18,131	87,742	6,165	112,038

The *Militär Wochenblatt* has an article on the three great battles before Metz, on the 14th, 16th, and 18th of August, 1870, from which we learn that 72 German officers and 1,081 soldiers fell at Colombey, 230 officers and 3,022 men at Vionville and Mars-la-Tour, and 310 officers and 3,905 men at Verneville, St. Privat, and Gravelotte. Of the last-mentioned 271 officers and 3,536 men were Prussians, 17 officers and 200 men Saxons, and 22 officers and 159 men Hessians.

MISCELLANEOUS.

A couple of fine oyster-beds have just been discovered at Littlehampton.

A balloon which started from Copenhagen has fallen into the Baltic. The passengers were saved.

A general rise of railway fares in Belgium is to take effect on the 1st of November.

The Chinese now mix willow leaves with the tea they export to the extent of from 10 to 20 per cent.

The new Dean of St. Paul's—the Rev. R. W. Church—is the eighty-fifth occupant of that post since the Conquest.

Alcohol was first invented and used to stain the cheeks of the ladies of Arabia 920 years ago. It still reddens portions of the human face.

The *Times of India* has news via Zanzibar of Dr. Livingstone. A messenger from him had arrived at Ujiji, requesting that supplies might be forwarded.

The death has just occurred at Norwich of an old soldier named Isaac Plunkett, who served under the Duke of York in Holland in the campaign of 1795.

Queen Victoria's statue in Montreal will be unveiled, it is said, by the Princess Louise and the Marquis of Lorne on their arrival in Canada this month.

From 1,000L to 2,000L worth of nets have been lost by the fishermen stationed at Fraserberg, in Scotland, by their being greatly over-weighted with fish.

BREWERS' FORTUNES.—The will of Edward Wigan has been proved under 200,000L—he left bequests to the amount of 5,000L; that of Mr. Thomas Farnell, of Isleworth, under 300,000L—he left 2,000L as an endowment for a district church at Isleworth; that of Edward Wigan, under 60,000L; and that of E. V. Ind, under 90,000L personalty.

TO ENTERPRISING CAPITALISTS.—There is now a chance for any one with money and enterprise enough to buy an island. It is said that Herm, one of the smaller of the Channel Islands group, is for sale. This tiny island is about a mile long by three-quarters broad. It is fertile—at least, in parts—has a fine shell beach, and is tolerably well-stocked with game. Being only half an hour's sail from Guernsey, it is sufficiently accessible. The Government, social condition, singular customs, and picturesque scenery of these Norman dependencies of the crown are little known to the majority of Englishmen, but are well worth a better acquaintance.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

G. F. E.—The tale is romantic, and distinguishable more for the kind feeling and filial piety with which it is pervaded than for any especial ability, either in the delineation of character or the construction of the story. The copyist has blundered occasionally.

BELLOW BRIDGE.—The cause of a body rising in the water is not from the breaking of the gall but in consequence of the body becoming lighter than water from the generation of gas as putrefaction proceeds. A body will, therefore, float sooner in warm than in cold weather.

LEONARD.—The rapid oxidation of zinc when used as roofing may be obviated by coating it with a liquid prepared as follows:—One part by weight of copper scales, with one part of sulphuric acid and three parts of hydrochloric acid, are heated in a porcelain vessel until red fumes cease to be evolved and the copper is entirely dissolved; to this 64 parts of water are added, and the whole filtered.

AN OLD ENGLANDER.—The greatest length of Lake Superior is 335 miles, its greatest breadth is 160 miles, mean depth 639 feet, elevation 627 feet, area 82,000 square miles. The greatest length of Lake Michigan is 300 miles, its greatest breadth 108 miles, mean depth 500 feet, elevation 506 feet, area 23,000 square miles. The greatest length of Lake Huron is 200 miles, its greatest breadth is 100 miles, mean depth 900 feet, elevation 274 feet, area 20,000 miles. The greatest length of Lake Erie is 230 miles, its greatest breadth is 80 miles, mean depth 84 feet, elevation 535 feet, area 6,000 square miles. The greatest length of Lake Ontario is 130 miles, its greatest breadth is 65 miles, mean depth 500 feet, elevation 260 feet, area 6,000 square miles. The length of all five is 1,364 miles, covering an area of upwards of 90,000 miles.

MARY JANE.—Gather the walnuts before the inside shell is hard, which may be known by trying them with a pin; lay them into salt and water for nine days, changing the liquor every three days; then take them out and dry them in the air on a sieve or mat; they should not touch each other, and should be turned so that every side may become black alike; then put them in a jar. When half the nuts are in put in an onion with about thirty cloves stuck into it and add the rest of the nuts. To a hundred walnuts allow half a pint of mustard seed, a quarter of an ounce of mace, half an ounce of pepper corns, and sixty bay leaves; boil all the spice in some good common vinegar and pour it boiling hot upon the nuts, taking care to have them entirely covered; stop the mouth of the jar with a cloth, and when cold cover it with bladder or leather. In about six weeks they will be fit for use, when they should be examined, and if they have absorbed the vinegar, so as to leave the nuts dry, should be heated, but it need not be boiled.

CLEAVER.—The amount of meat obtained from a domestic animal sold by its live weight is quite variable. From the statistics derived from the public slaughter-houses of Paris and Brussels it appears that certain animals yield as much as 70 per cent. of meat, while others give only 50 per cent. The mean weight of meat produced is calculated at 58 per cent. of the live weight in beef cattle. In the case of sheep the proportion is from 40 to 51 per cent. It appears that the different products from oxen and sheep are as follows:—An ox of the live weight of 1,332 pounds yields—meat, 771½ pounds; skin, 11½; grease, 57; blood, 55½; feet and hoofs, 22; head, 11; tongue, 6½; lungs and heart, 15½; liver and spleen, 20½; intestines, 66½; loss and evaporation, 154½; making the total of 1,332 pounds. The product from a sheep, weighing 110½ pounds, is as follows:—Meat, 51½ pounds; skin, 7½; grease, 5½; blood, 4½; feet and hoofs, 2½; tongue, 4½; liver, and spleen, 4½; intestines, 6½; loss and evaporation, 19½; making the total of 110½ pounds.

R. S.—1. The poetry will not do. 2. With regard to Wickliffe's translation of the Bible, it must be remembered that it was completed perhaps before the art of printing was invented, and certainly before that art was practised in England. It may be presumed, therefore, that the motion for suppressing this translation, made in the House of Lords in the thirteenth year of Richard the Second, was directed not only against the manuscript itself, but virtually against the change in the opinions of the people effected by the preaching of the great reformer and his disciples, and of course the reason of the bill is found in the disapproval by its author of Wickliffe's tenets. It is believed that the bill was rejected, principally owing to the influence of the king's uncle, John O'Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and the words of his speech made on that occasion, which are generally

quoted, are:—"We will not be the drags of all, seeing other nations have the law of God which is the law of our faith, written in their own language." You will perceive that this quotation differs slightly from the phraseology employed by you. You are also incorrect in supposing that Wickliffe merely translated the Old Testament, the facts being that he finished the translation of the New Testament first: this was completed about the year 1367, while the Old Testament was completed in 1381. 3. In reply to your remaining questions, it is true that after the bill above alluded to was thrown out by the House of Lords many persons were punished severely, and even with death, for reading the scriptures in English, but this hardly bears out your insinuation that the possession of Wickliffe's version was made a capital offence. What occurred was this, the clergy in convocation attempted to control the reading of the Bible. In 1408, or thereabouts, the Archbishop of Canterbury by the day decreed, in convocation, that no translation made either in or since Wickliffe's time should be read till approved by the bishop of the diocese or in a provincial council. Then, though the New Testament of Erasmus received the approbation of Pope Leo X., it was opposed by many of the clergy of the period. "We must," exclaimed the Vicar of Croydon, in a sermon preached at St. Paul's Cross: "we must root out printing, or printing will root us out;" and it was against the indiscriminate perusal and circulation of the Bible in English that the fourth rule of the congregation of the Index, sanctioned by the Council of Trent, was expressly framed. These and other decrees were the cause of great persecution, but death did not always and necessarily ensue; the martyrs of the period being supposed to be guilty of something more heinous than the mere possession (the case you put) of an English Bible.

LOVE'S AWAKENING:
So then, since Love is but a dream,
And woman's faith far less,
Avainst sweet hopes that mock the life
They promised once to bless.
Come thou, Ambition, to my soul,
And give me all thy power
To win a meed of gold or fame
Instead of Love's sweet bower.
Ah! I had thrown thee quite aside,
Contented to recline
Upon the bosom of my love,
When I believed her mine.
Her own hand waked me from the dream,
And broke the magic spell;
For me, I loved the visioned trance
And glamour all too well.
I had no thought of any gain,
Lost love in loving thee,
Save that I deemed the greatest boon
The tenderness for me.
A beggar maid I would have had
As humbly for thy heart,
While it was what I dreamt it once—
Of Heaven a little part.
'Tis over, and I am a man,
And youth and strength are mine;
I can forget the foolish life
That melted into thine.
And broken lies the idol proud,
Beneath whose cruel feet
I cast the pearls of faith and love,
So sad a fate to meet.
My good sword hangs upon the wall,
My steed stands at the gate,
I cast the lover's lot aside,
And woo the warrior now,
I buckle on my armour now,
And life lies all before,
Though the bright young dream, the tender
dream—
The dream of love—is o'er.

M. K. D.

HORRUS.—The apple grower should never forget that every producer needs to be fed in proportion to his product. If a cow gives twenty quarts of milk per day she needs more grass or other food than if she gave but two quarts; and an acre of orchard that yields a hundred barrels of apples per annum needs something given to the soil to balance the draught made upon it. Nature offers us good bargains, but she does not trust, and will not be cheated when, she offers a bushel of corn for a bushel of dirty salt, shell, lime, or wood ashes, a load of hay for a load of muck, we ought not to stint the measure, but pay her demands ungrudgingly.

TRADESMAN just turned forty would like to marry a widow about his own age. He has two children and a prosperous business, and would not object to children.

W. W. W., thirty, medium height, fair hair and beard,

a persevering and industrious mechanic. Respondent to be cheerful and loving.

SUSANNAH, eighteen, short, with fair hair and gray eyes, a domestic servant, has been in her present situation three years, would like to correspond with a young mechanic, steady and fond of home comforts.

ANNIE, eighteen, 5ft. 1in., pretty, merry, and accomplished, has fair hair and a good figure. Respondent should be about twenty-one, rather dark, amiable, educated, and in a gentlemanly position.

BARBARA, 5ft., a brunette, vivacious and thrifty, will have 500/- on her wedding-day, which she would place under the management of her husband if he had steady habits, energy, prudence, and business capability. Good looks are not an essential qualification.

HARRIET, twenty-six, 5ft. 3in., dark bushy whiskers and moustache, a mechanic in permanent employment at good wages, is desirous of settling in life. Respondent to be tall, not more than twenty-four, fair, and good looking, but, above all, thoroughly domesticated and capable of making a good working-man's wife. "Harrriet" is very steady, and has saved a little money.

TODDIE, tall, dark, good looking, and gentlemanly, a clerk in a good situation, has provided a comfortable

home, in which he is anxious to see as his wife a well-educated young lady, who should be able to superintend domestic arrangements with economy, and be good tempered and loving. To a lady with such qualifications, irrespective of personal attractions, "Teddrie" would be a devoted husband.

EVANGELINE, twenty, tall, graceful, and elegant figure, has blue eyes and golden hair, considered very pretty—undoubtedly accomplished and loving—would make an excellent wife to a young gentleman of irreproachable character, superior education, cultured mind, and amiable disposition; one who is tall and dark preferred—"Evangeline" will have a small income when she is of age.

MARY OF SUSSEX, short, stout, ruddy complexion, and well domesticated, can also play the piano and sing, but prefers giving her attention to household matters; she is a farmer's daughter, and would like to marry a fair and good-looking young man of about her own age (twenty-three), but he must be kind and loving, having some business or calling in London preferred—fond of his home, and steady; smoking at home not objected to.

RUTH AND EDITH.—"Ruth," twenty-one, 5ft. 3in., very dark hair, black sparkling eyes, regular features, and slightly inclined to epicanthus, wishes to correspond with a gentleman of sound sense, and business man. He must be tall, dark, and of a loving disposition. "Edith" is fair, with brown eyes and hair, 5ft. 3in., and twenty, the daughter of a retired licensed victualler. Respondent should be tall, good looking, possessed of some means, as well as good education and gentlemanly manners.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

A. H. is responded to by—"A. B.," eighteen, tall, fair, pretty, well educated, and domesticated; by—"Myrtle," nineteen, tall, good tempered, with expressive eyes, and brown hair, a young lady, domesticated; by—"Emily, S.," eighteen, above the medium height, very dark hair and eyes, fair complexion, amiable, and domesticated; and by—"Margareta," nineteen, medium height, brown hair, light blue eyes, good tempered, affectionate, and domesticated.

WILLIAM by—"Maggie," who would like to exchange cards.

ROSY-CHEEKED EMILY by—"Willie S.," twenty-two, 5ft. 5in., fair complexion, amiable, accomplished, and in good position.

CHARLEY by—"C. M. S.," 5ft. 5in., dark hair and eyes, good features, good tempered, steady, domesticated, and in every way capable of making a good wife to one who is steady, kind, and would prove worthy of her.

A BACHELOR by—"C. H.," middle aged, good looking, well educated, musical, fond of books, home, and comfort; has no encumbrances; and by—"W. W. C.," a widow, she is alone, and would try to make home happy. She is quiet, domesticated, and good tempered.

RALPH AND EDMUND by—"Sweet Briar and Wild Lily," "Sweet Briar," twenty, medium height, brown hair, hazel eyes, affectionate, and would make "Ralph" a good, industrious wife. "Wild Lily," nineteen, medium height, brown hair, light blue eyes, affectionate, good tempered, and industrious.

GENTLE ANNIE by—"Loving Willie," twenty-one, 5ft. 7in., dark curly hair, loving, good looking, employed on the Great Eastern Railway, and would do his best to make a home happy; and—"Arthur," tall, cheerful, fond of home, and in Government employ; wishes to receive her cards.

BATTIN THE REFEREE by—"Susie," twenty, medium height, brown hair, hazel eyes, can wash a shirt and iron it too; by—"Nellie," twenty-three, 5ft. 3in., dark, hazel eyes, and domesticated; by—"Alice," lively, rather tall, fond of children, and a laundress; and by—"E. G.," twenty, 5ft. 3in., dark hair and eyes, fair complexion, loving, and domesticated.

PRINTER by—"Violet," twenty, medium height, brown hair, good tempered, and good looking; by—"Tilly," nineteen, nice looking, with dark blue eyes; by—"J. M. A.," twenty-three, rather dark, good tempered, domesticated, and capable of making a good and loving wife; by—"Lizzie W.," nineteen; she is a country lass, dark eyes, good looking, good tempered, and affectionate; and by—"Carrie," twenty, medium height, dark hair and eyes, loving disposition, and would make a good wife.

HARRY BROWN by—"Minnie," rather tall, of fair complexion, and good tempered; by—"Helen," twenty-one, 4ft. 10in., dark hair, fair complexion, blue eyes, good tempered, and domesticated; by—"Myra," eighteen, tall, fair, gentle; she thinks that she answers his requirements, and would make a good wife to a kind husband; by—"J. U.," twenty-one, 5ft. 1in., dark hair, light eyes, dark complexion, can wash a shirt and darn stockings; and by—"C. H.," twenty, dark hair and eyes, nice looking, domesticated, and would make a loving wife.

REJECTED COMMUNICATIONS.—The following are declined with thanks: "G. W.," "W. F.," "P. G.," "Carlo," "Maude Victoria," and "LuLu."

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